

## HALE LECTURES

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THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS  
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OXFORD MOVEMENT



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By

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TO  
MAURICE B. RECKITT  
WITH GRATITUDE

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## PREFACE

This book is composed of the Hale Lectures delivered this year in the Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. I cannot allow it to be published without an expression of my sincere thanks to the Faculty and to the Hale Lecture Committee of the Board of Trustees for their invitation to me to undertake a most attractive task. To them belongs the credit for suggesting a theme so apposite and important as that which forms the subject of these pages. It is also a pleasure to acknowledge my appreciation of the many services of the Very Reverend the Dean, Dr. Frederick C. Grant.

If I have any qualifications for discussing the thesis of this book, they reside chiefly in the advantage of close contact with a group of Anglo-Catholic sociologists in England, from whose writings and conversation I have received more enlightenment and stimulus than I can repay. I am specially indebted to the Rev. V. A. Demant, B.Sc., B.Litt., for his invaluable analysis in his book, *This Unemployment*, and to the brilliant and searching discussions in *Faith and Society*, by Maurice B. Reckitt, M.A. I must add that I have also

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W. G. P.

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND,  
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THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS  
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## CHAPTER ONE

### THE BACKGROUND

Neither the Church, nor any movement of revival within the Church, is primarily to be recommended amongst men upon the ground that it assists the establishment of a successful social order. The sacred body of Christ is not called to be a hewer of wood and drawer of water in the service of this world; and those utopian speculations which have conceived some kind of religious assemblage within their ideal State, with the sole function of aiding the psychological processes of community, have departed far from the fellowship of the mystery which is the veritable historic Church. It no doubt is true that in the past the Church has been a large contributor to the structure of Western civilisation; nor is this mainly an accidental effect, due to historical circumstance. The more deeply conscious of her own nature the Church becomes, the more definite, the more indefeasible, must be her witness in the whole political and economic order: the more pointed and illuminating her admonitions to the confusions and injustices of the secular systems.

But this is not because her task lies within the limits of earthly horizons, or that she is ultimately concerned to produce no more than a happy adaptation of the human species to its terrestrial environment. It is because the Church is the sacramental house of life, and is ordained to secure the sublimation of the order of this world to the level of the invisible; so that, through her, the Holy City may come down from God, and the whole human activity become concentrated upon one heavenly vision.

"From the religious point of view," says Jacques Maritain, "there is a danger of considering the Church in the supernumerary benefits she dispenses as being the strongest bulwark of the social good rather than in her end and function and essential dignity which are to provide mankind with supernatural truth and means to eternal salvation, and in virtue of which she acquires the right to intervene in temporal matters."<sup>1</sup> And if we are to discuss the social implications of the Oxford Movement, we must bear this warning constantly in mind. No passionate entanglements of the Church with current disputes in the fields of politics and economics, even though she display her banners bravely upon the side of the outcast and the oppressed

<sup>1</sup> *The Things That Are Not Cæsar's*, p. 210.

and draw her sword against the mighty, can be accepted as the full discharge of her embassy beneath this world's skies. She has a prior service to perform: to declare the supernatural nature of man, and that divine end which alone can provide his energies and achievements with satisfying significance; and further, to offer that redemption of the wayward hearts and broken societies of men, apart from which all progress is but the misdirection of mankind toward the gates of hell.

The Church is thus concerned with the social order, because in her communion is given the foundation of the only social order in which men may dwell with abiding honour. When she fights in the secular fields, it must be with the secret knowledge that she is fighting for her own mystical significance. Whatever crushes human personality, whatever breaks human fellowship is her foe, because she is the mother of souls and their home and city. But her principal enemy is the assumption that man's life is to be fully realised and rightly ordered within, and by the resources of, the visible sphere alone. Cæsar demanded her submission at the beginning, and has never ceased to frown upon her claims. Her enemy is the world, self-sufficient, omniscient, with its false power and counterfeit majesty, seeking the determination of the human end

apart from God, and ordering the life of man for an unblest "good." Her enemy is the world as the corrupter of the natural law: the world which, expressed in secular Cæsarism or in secular humanism, is fallen in its pride and become the snare and seducer of its subjects.

To that world the social implications of the Catholic Faith may be conveyed only as the issue of repentance and the acceptance of a new directivity. Within that world, the divine order of the Church has ever to declare its own divinity as the true human basis. Therefore the prime relevance of the Oxford Movement for all our subsequent sociological discussions, lies in the fact that it was, in the English Church, the clearest and fullest re-affirmation of the primacy of the spiritual.

When Oxford was first startled by the voices of young men proclaiming the revival of the Church, it was not understood how far the moods and modes of the world had usurped the divine prerogative. It was not understood how shamefully the Church had consented. Even her defenders had been inclined to stand abashed before the cheap questions of a utilitarian generation, as though the current canons of "utility" were the standards by which she was to be judged. But the Catholic revival was more than a service to that ancient

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edifice which is the Church of England: it was a reaction and protest against assumptions which must, at length, affect every detail of human life. It was the revival of an order founded upon invisible reality, from which the world was learning more and more to avert its gaze. We, a century later, may see around us the culminating issues of the battle there and then joined.

The social significance of the Tractarian message has been variously estimated. Some have considered that it had no social reference, and is therefore to be praised. It cannot be denied that Anglo-Catholicism has had its own pietists who, failing to observe the true bearings of the Tractarian Church-doctrine and aware of the ascetic devotion of the Oxford leaders, have assumed that Catholicism is merely the authorised method of preparing souls for the life beyond the tomb. These have regarded every attempt to awaken social conscience in the Church as a distraction from its one task. Others have even failed to perpetuate very convincingly the Tractarian devotion, but have considered Catholicism sufficiently restored in an access of ceremonial meticulousness. Nevertheless one may deprecate the neglect either of the heart's devotion or of the honourable Catholic symbolism, and yet insist that the Catholic religion is even more.

Some, on the other hand, have held that the Tractarians were conscious of no social mission, were wholly occupied with a narrow ecclesiastical restoration, and were blind to the larger meaning of the very institutions, interpretations and practices which they were recommending; and for this they hold them blameworthy. Thus Professor C. C. J. Webb remarks that they neglected an adequate emphasis upon the "social character of the bestowal of grace through sacraments, by the recognition of which alone can they be satisfactorily discriminated from magical rites."<sup>2</sup> Such criticism we must examine later, but we may here remind ourselves that the very opposition offered by the Tractarians to the Evangelical doctrine, their very insistence upon the place of the Church in religion and theology, provides the only and necessary basis for the social explication of the Sacraments.

Others, yet again, have claimed that the Oxford Movement had direct civilising and social effects, and point to the subsequent social movements in the English Church as proof. Thus Canon Ollard, in his admirable *Short History of the Oxford Movement*, adduces as evidence of its social significance, its influence in the Christian Social Union.<sup>3</sup> Such influence, exerted

<sup>2</sup> *Religious Thought in the Oxford Movement*, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* (ed. 1932), p. 270.

in that and in other organisations, and in the stimulation of social service in many fields, was doubtless very great. But the true depths of social philosophy, the true scope of the revolution, inaugurated by the Catholic revival, are not so to be defined. It is a little curious that John Stuart Mill, "the oracle of rationalistic liberalism," should have been able to appreciate upon any side the work of the Oxford Movement. Yet he declared that "the Oxford theologians had done for England something like what Guizot, Villemain, Michelet, Cousin, had done a little earlier for France; they had opened, broadened, deepened the issues and meaning of European history; they had reminded us that history is European; that it is quite unintelligible if treated as merely local."<sup>4</sup> But it was not given to Mill to know the profounder issues raised by the Catholic revival, of which those effects which he praises were but the reverberations upon other levels.

With none of these estimates can we be satisfied. It is incredible that within a religion of Incarnation, a revival emphasising the objective continuity of the community claiming to be the social consequence of the Incarnation could have possessed no social reference, no implied criticism of the industrial and economic order

<sup>4</sup> Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, Vol. I, p. 120 (Lloyd's pop. ed.).



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of its period, no canons of a superior social structure, in the minds of those acute and thoughtful men who were its leaders. Yet it cannot be pretended that they were concerned to align the Church with any of the political programmes then before the nation; and it is certain that they were generally suspicious of those movements which were called progressive. They were necessarily preoccupied with one main consideration. The Church had to be saved. And my thesis will be that both the motive of saving the Church, and the methods and measures in doctrine and practice which they found themselves logically bound to adopt, implied, in the situation of their place and time, a profound reversal of the assumptions upon which the world was then living and has continued to live until it has now become patent that the world itself must abandon them or suffer relapse into some sub-civilised condition.

The Oxford Movement did not spring from a process of theorising *in vacuo*. It was not an academic hare started by a few ingenious minds. It was not intended merely to perplex a set of Oxford dons with an impudent paradox. Its social implications, if grounded deeply in the spiritual realm, are solid and certain in the light of common day, because it was concerned

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with spiritual interests in face of a definite contemporary situation in England. It arose with a consciousness of stress and urgency. Its leaders were as men hasty to deliver a message of astonishing import. For in England had come a crisis and turning-point of history, a crucial interaction of forces ready to determine the whole shape of the future; and the final question was already raised, as to whether the Church itself, the very witness of the unseen, was to be bound and fettered in the service of the powers of this world and allowed, from that time forth, to exist upon their sufferance. That situation we must now examine in more concrete detail.

The immediate occasion of the genesis of the Movement was the peril undoubtedly threatening the existence of the English Church in its historic form and continuity, arising from the sweeping projects of the Reform period.<sup>5</sup> But we can see beneath the surface of the events of that time, only if we make some attempt to grasp the nature of the reforming aspirations as they were moulded by certain prevalent assumptions in the realm of social philosophy; and to see how dangerously the Church was posed, how weak was her defence, upon the commonly received theory of her place in the

<sup>5</sup> R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement, 1833-1845*, pp. 1, 2.

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national economy, to which she herself had ostensibly, but never in deepest and essential truth, yielded assent.

The post-Napoleonic period was in England, as elsewhere, a time seething with new ideas, new hopes, made more explosive by the relentless governmental policy of repression. To the satanic rigours of the industrial revolution were added confused currents of political discontent, astonishing theorising and proposals for social betterment. The true origins of the discontent lay back in previous centuries: indeed, they were inherent in the whole modern development. When revolution flared up in France, multitudes in other lands rejoiced at the sight and hoped for the flames to spread. And when Wellington's soldiers marched home from Waterloo, there were still some Englishmen who hissed them in the streets. But the fury of revolutionary ardour was spent. The immediate danger of a complete overthrow of the European structure had passed,

"And kings crept out again to feel the sun."

Yet the protesting voice of the people was never entirely silenced, and, as Mr. Chesterton has said, "from the time when the first shout went up for Wilkes, to the time when the last Luddite fires were quenched in

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a cold rain of rationalism, the spirit of Cobbett, of rural republicanism, of English and patriotic democracy burned like a beacon."<sup>6</sup> As yet the protest in England was still looking backward for deliverance from present ills.

Under the repression of governmental powers, now delivered from their nightmare fears and become duly emboldened, the protest began to assume other forms. It produced the diatribes of Shelley, Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt, and amidst the whirling emotions of the time appeared the quite impossible political anarchism of Godwin, and the quite possible moral anarchism of Byron. Meanwhile, in the field of industrial organisation were to be heard the threatening monitions of coming storm. At the end of the eighteenth century, while the French Revolution was striking chill fear into the hearts of all who reposed in the settled social order, Wilberforce had "urged upon the willing Pitt the duty of passing the Combination Laws which rendered Trade Unionism illegal."<sup>7</sup> But by the year 1813, Robert Owen had published his *New View of Society*, and six years later the shooting down of working men at Peterloo aroused a storm of execration which proved to the government that there were limits to the exercise

<sup>6</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature*, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> G. M. Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 54, 55.

of power, and that the defeated forces of social change were gathering for a fresh endeavour.

Writing of the year 1821, and the infancy of Queen Victoria, Mr. Lytton Strachey has described the period in words which we shall do well to notice. "Great forces and fierce antagonisms seemed to be moving about the royal cradle. It was a time of faction and anger, of violent repression and profound discontent. A powerful movement, which had for long been checked by adverse circumstances, was now spreading throughout the country. New passions, new desires, were abroad; or rather, old passions and old desires, re-incarnated with a new potency: love of freedom, hatred of injustice, hope for the future of man. The mighty still sat proudly in their seats, dispensing the ancient tyranny; but a storm was gathering out of the darkness and already there was lightning in the sky."<sup>8</sup>

In the year of which Mr. Strachey is here writing, most of those who were to become prominent in the Tractarian Movement were at the early dawn of manhood, when the perceptions are quick, impressions readily received, and interest in the great world fast awakening. Keble, indeed, was twenty-nine. But Newman was twenty, Pusey twenty-one, and Hurrell Froude

<sup>8</sup> *Queen Victoria*, pp. 22, 23.

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eighteen. They were educated in a security beyond the ramparts of which flickered the lightning of which Mr. Strachey speaks. They knew, as all educated men knew, that there were possibilities of portentous change. And as they grew up to care for the most priceless values of the soul, they learned that some of those possibilities were fraught with peril.

But there was no revolution. Twenty years later, upon the continent, the revolutionary fires gleamed again here and there, and once again in England there were tumults and threats. But England meanwhile had effected a compromise which is a monumental example of what the English governing classes call their political sagacity, and what observers sometimes call their political duplicity. The compromise did not overturn the seats of power; but it allowed a few more people to share them. It did not redress the wrongs of the poor, but it offered them a little balm and some vague promises. It did not satisfy the demands of those who had eaten the strong meat of St. Simon, Fourier and Owen. But it gave men more confidence in agitation, and those who saw in the first, timid instalments of political liberalism a foretaste of some glorious cataclysm of all privilege, were eager to press on to that happy goal.

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England under Canning was at length released from her alliance with tyrannical powers, contracted during the struggle with Napoleon.<sup>9</sup> The trading interests of the country were now ardently opposed to some of the repressive measures which had operated.<sup>10</sup> The emergent manufacturers were clamouring for fuller political power. But Peel, though a manufacturer's son, was the darling of the squires and rectors, and his entrance into the Cabinet in 1822 as Home Secretary made easier the passing of that Liberal-Tory legislation which at this time deflected the gravest menace of social disaster.<sup>11</sup> The reforms at the Home Office included the reform of the criminal code, law reforms, the establishment in London of the Police Force, to avoid collisions between the civil population and the soldiery, and, after much effort, the repeal of the Combination Laws. There followed two measures of immense importance for the whole theory of the relation between the English State and the English Church: the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which had disabled Dissenters from holding civil office, and Catholic Emancipation which gave to Roman Catholics the status of English citizens. But they were regarded as safe ex-

<sup>9</sup> Trevelyan, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 198, 199. Footnote, p. 196.

amples of that mild, liberalising process which was to ease the worst discontents; though they had repercussions which we must notice later.

The process, however, was to be carried further than some of its original sponsors had desired or dreamed. By 1830 there had arisen a gigantic clamour for more searching and drastic political revisions; and in 1832, amidst immense popular excitement, the Reform Bill, rejected in the previous year, was reluctantly passed by the House of Lords. This meagre, but significant, extension of the franchise marked the end of an epoch. It was the year before the Oxford Movement was to begin with the preaching of Keble's Assize Sermon.

It is, then, to be observed, that if that Movement was a reaction from, and protest against, the assumptions of the world, England nevertheless in that period was apparently witnessing the sloughing off of trammels and the emergence of a new human hope; and there was less than sympathy between the Tractarians and the rising forces. It happens to be the fact that most of the Tractarians were conservatives by upbringing, and moved in circles where the social changes were feared and detested; and it is an easy conclusion that they either made no conscious connection between their religion and their politics, or regarded their religion as



the sanction of current political conservatism. I believe that to be an entirely superficial judgment.

It is true that wide social readjustments were necessary. It is true that some of the emancipating movements of the time were fraught with pity for the oppressed and with a burning hatred of cruelty and injustice. But there are other considerations, some of them so profound as to make the humanitarian idealism of that day appear as a somewhat irrelevant phenomenon.

Even the visible political forces which broke the old aristocratic theory were not entirely concerned for human welfare. They were not unconscious of the interests of capitalist industry and finance, and it may be argued that they demolished one tyranny eventually to construct another, more efficient one. We shall confront the final issues of their work at a later stage of our study. Here it may be remarked that even the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery, regarded, with much reason, as the crowning evidence of the disinterested spirit of the time, had profitable consequences for English capitalists who yet saw no reason to encourage the English proletariat with any hope of release from their economic bonds.

I shall maintain that it was neither lack of human

sympathy nor failure to perceive the broad implications of the Catholic Faith, that was responsible for the reluctance of the Tractarians to accept the so-called measures of progress as satisfying evidence that all was well with their country. For, indeed, they speedily found themselves in equal opposition to the strongholds of political reaction. Theirs was not the rejection of a party or a programme. It was the declaration of war upon that system of values, that conception of the human task and end, that notion of the scope of human resources and responsibilities, which had come into the world, silently, insidiously, at the Renaissance, and had quietly changed the outlook of men upon the final meaning of their own existence until now, at length, they were preparing to claim complete mastery and to establish themselves as the only orthodoxy.

If in some respects the aims of secular humanism now surpass even its dreams of a century ago, it may at least be said to-day that its professors are suffering from a senile blindness. For its effects are now glaringly revealed. Moreover, the Church, awakened by the Catholic revival, is enlightened as to the nature of the enemy as it was not when Newman sounded the alarm. The Tractarians in Oxford became aware of the actual direction of those ideas and forces which,

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variously interpreted by this party or that, were in reality threatening the central citadel of sanctity, and no apologetic of progress could blind them to the issue. They were not politicians, or economists, or sociologists; but they saw a few principles with intense and painful clearness. They saw them in grave jeopardy. And it happens that those principles are the bedrock of human dignity, the foundations of the soul and of society.

Their description of the enemy as "liberalism" is now somewhat misleading in view of more recent applications of the word. It is true that Pusey, early aware of the movements of liberal theology and biblical criticism in Germany, brought to Oxford a grave warning concerning their tendencies. It is true, also, that out of the current political turmoil the liberal political party was being shaped, and that much of the attack upon the Church which we shall presently notice was the work of its adherents. But, as Fr. Widdrington has observed, liberalism is a "protean word" in the writings of Newman, who saw in the "struggle convulsing European society a phase in the age-long warfare of the Two Cities: the earthly and the heavenly."<sup>12</sup>

It was not the criticism of a literalist interpretation

<sup>12</sup> P. E. T. Widdrington, *The Social Teaching of the Oxford Movement* (C. L. A.), p. 10.

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of the Bible, or the application of a comparative scientific method to the sacred texts, or the re-examination of theological formularies that mattered, nor was a political criticism of the material terms of the Anglican Church establishment necessarily a sign of Satan. In so far as the Oxford Movement came into collision with such contemporary efforts, the fundamental reason was that it found them all in some measure influenced and guided by that complex of thought and feeling, that attitude to life and its possibilities, shaped in the philosophical, ethical and economic tendencies of that time, to which its leaders gave the name of "liberalism," and in which they saw "the tendencies of modern thought to destroy the basis of revealed religion, and ultimately of all that can be called religion at all."<sup>13</sup>

We have now to study the composition of the liberalism which lay in the background of so much thought and activity in that period. We shall see that its components found a common basis in the idea, more or less clearly conceived, that the whole realisation of the life of man was to be discovered in this world, and from the resources of this world, and that the conception of such secular development must be the test of all teach-

<sup>13</sup> R. W. Church, *Occasional Papers*, Vol. II, p. 386. Cf. *Tract 83, The Times of Antichrist*.

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ing. It was, indeed, the humanism of the Renaissance, now finally escaped from the traditions of a supernatural significance in human affairs, and seeking to discover the meaning of man's life without reference beyond the structure and movement of his secular organisation. It is impossible, within our present limits, to attempt an enumeration of all the tributaries of the great stream of secular, humanistic thought. Their confluence in the Victorian age concealed ultimate divergencies. Their common optimism has issued in confusion and world-weariness. They flowed from many directions, and for our present purpose we must be content to refer only to some of the more important of them.

The ethical self-reference of Kant and the political self-reference of Rousseau,<sup>14</sup> marked important stages in the rejection of the dogmatic traditions of supernatural authority. The rationalism of France issued in political, the rationalism of Germany in philosophical, revolution. But in England, the supreme influence was the more soberly and practically directed mind of Bentham. At the time of the birth of the Oxford Movement, his Utilitarian philosophy was exerting a many-sided influence in English thought, and was affecting

<sup>14</sup> Maritain, *Three Reformers. The Things That Are Not Cæsar's*, Appendix V.

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political proposals. "It was," says Dean Church, "the time when Bentham's Utilitarianism had at length made its way into prominence and importance. It had gained a hold on a number of powerful minds in society and political life. It was threatening to become the dominant and popular philosophy. It began, in some ways beneficial, to affect and even control legislation. It made desperate attempts to take possession of the whole province of morals. It forced those who saw through its mischief, who hated and feared it, to seek a reason, and a solid and strong one, for the faith which was in them as to the reality of conscience and the mysterious distinction between right and wrong."<sup>15</sup>

It is no part of my task to undertake a criticism of the utilitarian ethic. It has been sufficiently pulverised.<sup>16</sup> Based in hedonism, without any adequate metaphysical or moral conception of "utility," and conceived by Bentham as specially an instrument of social reform, it was impossible that the general effect of the philosophy should be other than to fortify the belief that the success of the human adaptation to this world must be the determining canon of all action. Religion, upon this basis, could never be more than the handmaid of sociology; and, in fact, the influence of the Bentham-

<sup>15</sup> R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement*, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>16</sup> W. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, Vol. I, pp. 33-75.

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ites was all in the direction of finding secular solutions for the problems of the soul. The great, dynamic dogmas of the Catholic Faith seemed, to such men, remote, pale and ineffectual, having no bearing upon the issues confronting the modern world; and they proffered a hope based upon what they fondly, amidst their limitations, believed to be common sense.

It is not easy precisely to estimate the measure of conscious antagonism offered by the Tractarians to the various systems which were being shaped by contemporary thinkers, for it is not always clear how far they were conversant with them. But however great the genius of a particular thinker, and however strongly marked by his own creative energies his system may be, it is certain that his thought does not spring in his mind entirely unrelated to the currents around him. The mood, the half-articulated assumption and tendency then abroad, fluid and chaotic in many minds, found clear and signal expression in the work of Hegel in Germany and of Comte in France. We need not suppose that the Oxford theologians were consciously attacking their systems; but we may take Hegel and Comte as illustrating in crystalline forms those subtle moods and trends which they were concerned to oppose.

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Though little may have been known, in Oxford, of recent German metaphysical speculation, Pusey had paid two visits to Germany between 1825 and 1827. At Göttingen he had met Eichhorn, the professor of philosophy, and had attended his lectures, and in Berlin had been received by Schleiermacher. He returned to Oxford deploring the inroads of rationalism upon German theology, and fearing its future advances in English thought. Now, what lay behind the theological changes in Germany was undoubtedly that philosophical revolution of which we have spoken. This, indeed, was only carrying forward a certain strong drift of Western philosophy since its severance from the traditions of Catholic thought, and the certain goal before it was the identification, the equation, of man, with the ultimate spiritual principle of the universe.

More and more the Germans were revealing the aim of enclosing the reality of God and the Universe within the categories of the human mind. Such was the post-Kantian development, tortuous and wavering as it may have been. The process culminated in Hegel, whose genius crystallised much that was elsewhere inchoate and groping. Born in 1770, he published his first work in 1801.<sup>17</sup> Between 1812 and 1816 he produced his *Logic*,

<sup>17</sup> *On the Differences Between the Systems of Fichte and Schelling.*



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and in 1817 appeared the statement of his rounded philosophy in his *Encyclopædia of the Philosophic Sciences*. It was the enriched and masterly statement of the philosophy of identity which he had originally received through Schelling.

His Absolute, it is true, was no mere unmoving substance in which all differences irrationally disappear, in which the ancient antinomies of thought are obliterated in some process beyond thought. "The Absolute," he said, "is spirit," expressing and realising and becoming itself through thesis and antithesis, until at length in synthesis it completes its own becoming. The intrinsic nature of this process is that of rational consciousness. "That which is real is rational," he taught, "and that which is rational is real." But it is the world itself that is the evolution of the thinking spirit. We are all engaged, according to Hegel, in the self-explication of the Absolute. He attempted to relate his system to Christian theology, but the attempt resolved itself into an unconvincing adaptation of Christian theology to his system. He conceived that God had incarnated himself in man; but he meant no more than that the human consciousness was the veritable mode of the Absolute. And therefore, for him, philosophy, making plain the assumptions of ordinary consciousness, was

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the actual explication of God in a sense superior to that which religion can ever accomplish. Here we see the distinction between natural and supernatural abolished. There may be a sense in which that distinction may be disregarded, where the transcendence of God is firmly held in union with a sacramental view of the universe. But the philosophy of Absolute Idealism is always in danger of worshipping the God of things as they are, and of presenting the sphere of mundane experience as the totality of human possibility, the sole sphere of human conduct, and as containing all the resources for man's guidance.

Thus we find, much later, a representative English Hegelian, Professor Bosanquet, regarding the realisation of the human self through human society as the very stuff of ultimate reality; but disclosing no ground from which this process may be authoritatively guided, tested or judged. He regards the State as the necessary and supreme mode of the Absolute, and as regulative of all social elements, of which he supposes the Church to be one. This can mean only that the State includes and subsumes the Church. Through the actual secular organism as it is, Reality comes to itself, and only through the State can the State develop. The process is identical with the human life and business, that is

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actually going on.<sup>18</sup> This view is based upon Hegel's doctrine that the State has the same content as religion, but in an explicit and rationalised form. The suggestion, which Hegel scarcely veils, is that the State does the only work that religion ever could do, and does it much more effectively.<sup>19</sup>

Hegel died in 1831. His organic conceptions may seem far removed from the individualism prevalent in the origins of secular humanism; but they exhibit an attempt at a new and positive construction, adequate to all the facts of man's existence, upon what, for all its fine metaphysical flights, amounts to the acceptance of the secular as the whole human sphere. For in this one sphere, the Absolute was discovering itself. There was no other. Hegel, however, was attempting a self-contradictory task. In the colossal edifice of his dialectic he was attempting to provide with a metaphysic certain basic predilections of his age, a certain bias of the modern Western mind, a certain outlook and habit, which, as Comte presently saw, involved the supersession of metaphysic as surely as they assumed the exhaustion of theology.

It was in 1826 that Comte, having broken away from the influence of St. Simon who had long been his

<sup>18</sup> Bernard Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*.

<sup>19</sup> See Bosanquet's treatment of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. *Op. cit.*

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master, commenced to deliver in Paris the lectures in which he first announced his proposals for clearing up the intellectual confusion of the post-revolutionary period. The French secularism reaches in him its extreme philosophical expression. In 1830 he began the publication of the six volumes of his *Philosophie Positive*. He argued that an analysis of history discovered certain definite stages of progress in man's conception of his relation to the universe. The earliest was what Comte called the theological stage, in which super-human wills were called in to account for all phenomena. In the next, the metaphysical, stage, abstraction and the search for impersonal metaphysical principles outmoded theology. And at length, so Comte thought, man had arrived at the positive, experiential stage, in which all inquiry into causes beyond the phenomenal was to be abandoned as useless, and man was to undertake, in his maturity, his real task of living in the world of sensible experience. The instrument which would unify experience would be science, and Comte believed that so understanding its proper employment and range, the human race would achieve its true self-realisation.<sup>20</sup>

Bishop Westcott ventured to find in Positivism a

<sup>20</sup> *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*. Bohn's Lib., 3 vols,

lesson for Christians, in that "by asserting religion to be the complete harmony of man with the Cosmos, it has forced again upon our notice aspects of Christian truth which have been more or less hidden since the teaching of the greatest Greek Fathers was superseded in the West by the necessarily narrower system of Latin theology."<sup>21</sup> If Westcott had extracted from this Positivist doctrine a warning rather than a lesson, I should be more disposed to agree with him. There are no Christian lessons to be learned from the assertion that religion is "the complete harmony of man with the Cosmos," for that assertion, in the Positivist sense, is untrue. Religion is the complete harmony of man with God. He may employ the visible world in the attainment of that harmony; but when he seeks the regulation of his life from "the Cosmos," he begins to lose his essential humanity. This is the outlook of Christian dogma, and it involves a dogmatic estimate of man. The harmony of man with the Cosmos need imply no such estimate, for a black beetle is presumably in some measure of harmony with the Cosmos. The harmony to which Comte would direct man would necessarily be far more complex; but it would nevertheless be a harmony within a natural order, and

<sup>21</sup> B. F. Westcott, *Gospel of the Resurrection*, 2nd ed., Appendix.

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such harmony, as a final satisfaction, is for men for ever unattainable. In this world no son of man hath where to lay his head.

Westcott, of course, meant only to encourage a return to the Christian humanism of Greek theology, and of this we shall have more to say. He seems to have failed to perceive that Positivism could never point the way to any Christian goal. The religion of humanity which Comte supplied as a concession to certain needs of men which he had previously overlooked, was a combination of sentimentalism and negation. Indeed the proper name for Positivism is Negativism. But it supplied an early example of the glorification of man whose significance for any realm beyond that of the phenomenal was implicitly denied.

In Comte, then, we see the philosophy of secular humanism, the real genius of the "liberalism" against which the Tractarians set their faces. It was a complete rejection of the supernatural foundations and relations of human existence. It must inevitably affect the conception of man's intrinsic ethical and social end, by placing him definitively in this world. And what was to become of him in so strange and unsatisfying an environment, the next century was to show.

The thinkers to whom we have referred are illustra-

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tive of the forces contributing to the trend of thought and practice which the Oxford leaders viewed with so great suspicion and alarm. And it is not surprising that proposals for social change of which the origin could in any way be traced to such sources should have failed to win their enthusiasm. But beneath the social ferment of the period, there was in fact, sometimes clearly, sometimes hazily and in confused fashion, a widespread hope for the human future based on nothing more than an expectation of good to be derived from the general abrogation of old standards, old beliefs and old traditions.

We must remember, however, that the roseate optimism born of such undogmatic trust in humanity, the vague expectation of a good time somehow arriving for everybody, had sooner or later to come to terms with another set of ideas and facts which, equally accepting the positive and secular proposition, did not promise any general emancipation. The conclusions of the classical economists, and the uses made of them by the leaders of capitalist industry, were strongly in the field. The whole industrial development was proceeding apace, with its destruction of social tradition and humble amenities, its ruinous tax upon bodies and souls in the growing aggregations of population herded

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in squalor. The first railway had been constructed in 1822, the symbol of advances which were destined to arrive at more stupefying problems of sociology than any they ever solved. More explicit upon this side of the secularist address, was the inhumanism which upon those sides expressed in the writings of Bentham, Hegel and Comte remained veiled. And of the fundamental inhumanism of all this humanism, the Tractarians were made intuitively aware by their return to the Catholic foundations.

The people who believed that against the new forms of oppression the cause of human liberty would be better served by the rationalism and secularism which had spoken in Gibbon and Tom Paine, than by the dogmas of the Faith, were gravely misguided.<sup>22</sup> But their belief was for the moment ardent. Robert Owen, having in 1817 indulged in a "denunciation of all religion," and having previously declared that "man's character is made for, and not by him," and that any character may be given to a community by "applying certain means which are to a great extent at the command and under the control or easily made so, of those who possess the government of nations,"<sup>23</sup> proceeded

<sup>22</sup> G. C. Binyon, *The Christian Socialist Movement in England*, pp. 54, 55.

<sup>23</sup> *New View of Society*, 1813.



to announce the inauguration of the millennium. The date was May 1, 1833, and Owen proclaimed to the world "the commencement, on this day, of the promised millennium, founded on rational principles and consistent practice."<sup>24</sup> His shrewd, sincere, but incurably naïve mind had overlooked that the millennium had never been "promised" as the effect of "rational principles." It is worth noticing that two months later Keble made his pronouncement, not upon the millennium, but upon the national apostasy.

The essential nature of the "liberalism" against which the Tractarians strove was not the desire for liberation from unprincipled autocracy, unfair privilege or class superiority, but something less honourable, something subversive, not merely of social systems which might well be overthrown in the service of God, but of the painfully preserved sanctities of man's existence. It was the belief that the human future might be conducted upon a basis of sheer experimentalism. It is a basis which, denying dogma, denied any spiritual significance, any mystical essence, in human personality and society.<sup>25</sup> Such secularised humanism, devoid of any firm dogma of man, comes at length to regard only the phenomenal values of personality. As it de-

<sup>24</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>25</sup> Maritain, *The Things That Are Not Cæsar's*, pp. xxv, xxvi, 133.

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molished the old aristocracy, it looked like a charter of freedom. A man must now prove his worth for this world. In the result, it is unable to convince any man that he is worth very much. It brought the modern plutocracy and the consequent confusion and loss of human value and direction.

At this time the Church of England lay supine amidst privileges which she had apparently been willing to regard as benefactions of a State having an unquestionable competence to patronise and control her. The Erastianism of the period was no more the mood of the Elizabethan settlement than was the current Protestant interpretation of her formularies; but in the eyes of the majority of the nation, and in the opinion of many of her bishops and clergy, the reformed Church of England was a Protestant body, called into existence at the Reformation and secured by the special protection of the State. This debased interpretation had become diffused by the drift of historical circumstance, and was accentuated by the loss of the distinctive voice of the Church due to the long suppression of Convocations.

The original conception of a mutual establishment as between Church and nation, with Convocations in direct relation with an anointed monarch who, while

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the supreme ruler of the State, was also a member of the Church; and with the Commons itself, in one respect, a lay court of the Church, had yielded to changes in the national life. William of Orange and the Hanoverians had brought to the balance of English Church and State an alien tradition. The power of the Whigs had gradually limited the personal monarchy. The Divine Right of Kings had passed. Power was more and more vested in Parliament. Thus Parliament as the effective government of the realm came into control of the Church. And the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, together with Catholic Emancipation, had now disposed of the barest pretence that the government of England was in the spiritual tutelage of the Anglican Church. And this meant, quite logically, the growth of a purely secular theory of the State.

The issue must therefore inevitably arise: Was the Church to retrace her steps from the compromising entanglement in which she found herself controlled by a power owning no necessary allegiance to her doctrines, or was she to remain its contented servant, submitting to its ordinances and increasingly reflecting its changing ethos? Identified with a social order which the gathering forces of liberalism were seeking to de-

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molish, the Church was imperilled by every liberal attack upon the social structure which the State upheld. And there was as yet no strong voice to awaken her to a recollection of her true foundation and nature.

The political changes of the eighteenth century had profoundly modified the spirit and outlook of English conservatism. Originally the guardian of the old theory, whereof the origin lay in mediæval doctrine, of the unity of Church and State, the State itself admitting a religious basis, Toryism in the Reform period had become the ossified defence of an impossible *status quo*. Unfortunately, its historic tradition, though dead and forsaken, still seemed to demand of the Anglican clergy their loyal support. But this, indeed, had become largely a matter of habit, combined with a mere thoughtless fear of change. It was a Tory Government which had been compelled to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, and the measure had been heartily hated by the clergy. But it is very questionable how far their opposition was inspired by any consuming consciousness of the Church of England as the Catholic and Apostolic body in England. The same stupid attachment to the established social order caused the bishops and clergy generally to offer furious opposition to the Reform Bill. It was the time when the Radicals said

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of the clergy that there was "a black recruiting sergeant in every parish."<sup>26</sup> It may be said that the Toryism of the period, professed as it was by the Church party, was as secular as the Liberalism, without possessing humanitarian passion or any other moral value to recommend it.

Within the Church itself, the High Church Party, while still retaining a devotion to scholarship and some standards of churchly practice, had ceased to hold in any active fashion such a doctrine of the Church as would challenge the common Erastian assumptions. Dean Church praises in it what was worthy of praise, for belief in the Church's divine mission was by no means everywhere extinct; but, recalling the "typical clergyman in English pictures of the manners of the day, in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, in Miss Austen's novels, in Crabbe's *Parish Register*," he remarks that "the disproportion between the purposes for which the Church with its ministry was founded and the actual tone and feeling amongst those responsible for its service had become too great." "Men," he says, "were afraid of principles." And he declares that "the blot upon the English Church was its worldliness."<sup>27</sup>

Over against the High Churchmen, stood "the re-

<sup>26</sup> Ollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 5.

<sup>27</sup> R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement*, p. 3.

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ligious party," the Evangelicals. Dean Church asserts that between 1820 and 1830 the original saintliness of the earlier evangelical leaders had waned in an increase of popularity and fashionable encouragement, and that Evangelicalism had now become respectable, presenting eventually "all the characteristics of an exhausted teaching and a spent enthusiasm."<sup>28</sup> It is true that Evangelicals had been prominent in certain fields of social service, and that their influence upon the national morality had been immense. An eminent French historian declares that "during the nineteenth century evangelical religion was the moral cement of English society. It was the influence of the Evangelicals which invested the British aristocracy with an almost stoic dignity, restrained the plutocrats who had newly risen from the masses from vulgar ostentation and debauchery, and placed over the proletariat a select body of workmen enamoured of virtue and capable of self-restraint."<sup>29</sup> One is not necessarily a cynic if he smile at some of these phrases, and when Mr. Binyon offers the criticism that the Evangelicals "thought of social service as their way to heaven,"<sup>30</sup> we see the fundamental defect of their religion. And their attitude to

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13.

<sup>29</sup> Elie Halevy, *History of the English People*, Vol. III, p. 166.

<sup>30</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57.

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most of the social ills, their smug acceptance of glaring economic inequalities, their fanatical suspicion of working-class movements, were unbalanced by any attempt to recommend Christianity as an alternative basis of positive social construction.<sup>31</sup>

The Church as a whole was increasingly unpopular and out of touch with the nation. An Evangelical speaker at a conference in England a year ago, declared that "the advance of the Oxford Movement had been all along parallel with a decline in the Church of England both in numbers and influence."<sup>32</sup> The opinion of many other students is that a hundred years ago the Established Church was perilously near to a final disappearance as a distinct body. It was Dr. Arnold, no friend to the Oxford Movement, who wrote in June, 1832, "The Church, as it now stands, no human power can save."<sup>33</sup> During the Reform Bill agitation, a crowd had burned the house of the Bishop of Bristol, and Archbishop Howley had been mobbed in those Canterbury streets in which the English had once cheered S. Thomas as their champion. The secular uprising saw the privileges of the Church as a barrier

<sup>31</sup> Trevelyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55. J. L. and B. Hammond, *Town Labourer, passim*.

<sup>32</sup> Rev. W. Morris, Southport Evangelical Conference. *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 14, 1932.

<sup>33</sup> A. P. Stanley, *Life of Arnold*, Vol. I, p. 326.

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to its hopes. Many were with Cobbett in desiring the confiscation of Anglican revenues. Cobbett wished that they might be used for the redemption of the national debt.<sup>34</sup> The Radicals were joined by nonconformists in a determined effort to deal with what they believed to be an expensive anachronism. There appeared at length the final proof that the British Government supposed that it might, as a matter of policy, deal with the Church as with an obsolescent department of State.

The suppression of half the Irish bishoprics may, as a matter of policy, have been desirable.<sup>35</sup> It was the assumption that it could be carried out by the secular power as a secular policy that awakened the Oxford Movement. But there had seemed for some time no power within the Church capable of saving it. Greville considered it already doomed.<sup>36</sup> The Rev. Thomas Binney, an eminent nonconformist preacher, had described the Church as "an obstacle to the progress of truth and godliness in the land."<sup>37</sup> And Dean Church recounts in their own words the fear and despair of those who met at the Hadleigh Conference in 1833, to consider measures for the Church's defence.<sup>38</sup> They were appalled and overburdened by the Erastianism of

<sup>34</sup> W. Cobbett, *Political Register* (Jan. 14, 1831), Vol. 75, p. 129, *et seq.*

<sup>35</sup> Halevy, *op. cit.*, Vol III, pp. 132-163.

<sup>36</sup> Greville's Diary, *cir.* 1831.

<sup>37</sup> Halevy, *loc. cit.*

<sup>38</sup> Church, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-91.



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the Ministers of State, by the bewilderment of the Church's official leaders, by the strength of the attack, and by the confused counsels of those who sought to compromise with it. Dr. Arnold, as is well known, was for uniting all who professed to believe in Christ as a divine Person, and wished to consider the Church as a Fellowship of believers, Church order being a matter of expedience, and, except as a matter of order, sacraments being as well dispensed by one man as another.<sup>39</sup> The Evangelicals, willing to counteract Non-conformity by declaring that the Church of England was truly Protestant, and though opposed to confiscation, were not averse to seeing the State take in hand the reform of the Church, since they held that the Church had been created by Parliament in the sixteenth century.<sup>40</sup>

The Oxford leaders were compelled to action upon the Bill for the suppression of the Irish Bishoprics. They were not concerned with any argument for the material advantages of the proposals. They saw in them the undisguised assumption that the Church was the helpless servant of the State: an assumption in which they beheld the momentary but intensely significant culmination of all those dangerous forces

<sup>39</sup> Stanley, *Life of Arnold*. Vol. I, pp. 255, *et seq.*

<sup>40</sup> Halevy, *op. cit.*, p. 140, *et seq.*

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which were invading the world. Their argument has been thus summarised: The centre of the Christian religion is the Eucharist, and its celebration has been entrusted by God to the Bishops and their delegates the priests. Hence the Episcopate is a divine institution. To suppress bishoprics as parliament had just done was to outrage the dogma of apostolic succession and to usurp the prerogative of God.<sup>41</sup> This was to claim the historic Catholic foundation for the English Church; but it was a claim of yet deeper import. It was the implicit enunciation of a Divine Society independent of the secular power: an order built upon the Incarnation of the Son of God, which must derive its principle of cohesion from supernatural sources and must therefore be capable of rebuking the order established in the world.

Occasions apparently of relative insignificance may suffice to initiate between opposed forces a strife that has long been preparing. And now, from beneath the weight of years and the immense incubus of misunderstanding and the habitual acceptance of a false position, the English Church began to arise and to dissociate itself from the whole momentum of the contemporary world. The social implications of this

<sup>41</sup> Halevy, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

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Church Revival must obviously be profound and extensive. I wish to make it understood that they are certainly far greater than any consequences which have yet become visible.

The Tractarian Church doctrine had necessarily to be defended by reference to formularies and to history, and this exacting task laid a heavy burden of preoccupation upon the scholars and thinkers who had rallied to the Tractarian standard. The opposition and contumely with which they were confronted engaged them in ephemeral controversy which could not be avoided. Thus, in the study of the origins of the Movement, it is easy to miss its bearing upon the conception of human values, the true direction of human energies, and the true scope of man's self-realisation. We have no need to argue that the Tractarians themselves were aware of the full implications of their work, or that they did not sometimes allow too rigid interpretations and one-sided emphasis to obscure it. No herald understands the full import of his message, and it was certainly impossible for that group of Oxford Scholars in the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century to see the meaning that their labours might assume for discerning students a hundred years later.

Dean Stanley regarded the Movement as an attempt

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to gain support for the Tory Party,<sup>42</sup> and for the principles of "Church and State." This view is not easy to reconcile with Hurrell Froude's frequent outbursts against what he called the "old Tory humbug."<sup>43</sup> It was the defence of no such bond of Church and State as was then threatened that called forth the passionate energies and prayers of the Oxford leaders. They were vowed to the ideal of a Church which should invite the kingdoms of this world to accept her as the oracle of God. "Newman," says Fr. Widdrington, "was by instinct an aristocrat and a conservative. But . . . his conservatism was not that of the Tory Party, the 'two-bottle orthodox' of the Common Room or the Peter Plymleys of the country parsonages. It was the conservatism of Burke and Coleridge."<sup>44</sup> It was not comprehended by a determination to keep things as they are, but it was resolutely opposed to endorsing remedies for reform derived from a philosophy fundamentally secular."<sup>45</sup> A critic of Dean Stanley's distinction ought to have been able to discriminate between the Tory Party and the Divine Society.

There is more substance in the opinion of Professor Trevelyan, that the Tractarian leaders conceived a new

<sup>42</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1881.

<sup>43</sup> R. W. Church, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>45</sup> P. E. T. Widdrington, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>44</sup> We may add Dr. Johnson.

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basis for religious and ecclesiastical conservatism in England.<sup>46</sup> Their minds travelled back to the Caroline Church and State as to a last point of departure from which the English Church had descended to degradation. But the social implications of religious and ecclesiastical conservatism may be ultimately revolutionary. Seeing that such conservatism is the preservation of the liberating dogmas of the Faith, with its emphasis upon the intrinsic, supernatural value of every man, the divine issues of human society, and the sacramental significance of man's approach to the material world, it is likely that it will discover itself in sharp opposition to a world founded and buttressed in the negation of all these principles.

The whole Tractarian protest against the power of a secular government over the Church, the whole effort to disentangle the very idea of the Church from the secular presuppositions in which it had become embedded, and to proclaim it as the apostolic body, implied a supernatural criterion for the valuation of life and conduct: a supernatural reference in politics and economics. For the Church so to be disentangled was a Church of living men and women; but it was the Church of the Incarnation and the Holy Eucharist. It was

<sup>46</sup> G. M. Trevelyan, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

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he Body of Christ and the Fellowship of the Mystery.

Without such a divine centre of cohesion, no permanent comity of men is possible, and this is simply the melancholy burden of history. But even if it were possible to conceive the abiding establishment of a human republic, "world-unity, with collaboration in the extraction, manufacture, transport and distribution of natural resources for the equal benefit of all,"<sup>47</sup> apart from the tradition and realisation of a common redemption, shared grace, and an organic community of prayer and worship, what value or final spiritual relevance would reside in such an order? How would it support and refresh the heart of man, or sustain the secret dignity without which men sink from their manhood before the challenge of life and death? From any secular Utopia, where the soul meets nothing more than a worldly world, a man might turn as Wordsworth turned from the earthly scene in his own day, ready to prefer even the dead dreams of paganism to a world where there was neither faith nor vision.<sup>48</sup> Materialism and acquisitiveness, even could they be shaped into a universal collectivism, would still be materialism and acquisitiveness.

But the great age of secular humanism has produced

<sup>47</sup> G. C. Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>48</sup> Sonnet, *The World is Too Much With Us*.

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no Utopia. It has found new imprisonment for the soul, new exasperations for men and nations. It has not brought the Western world to any honourable goal. In its very concern for the mastery and exploitation of the resources of physical nature, it has reduced the spirit of man to a more abject servitude to material things than has ever before been suffered. It has, by the falseness of its own inherent theories, bound mankind to the service of a system from which all faith in the validity of the human end is absent. The rationalism which rejected the salvation offered by the Church has delivered the western world bound, to a gigantic self-contradiction, and has produced the very stupefaction of saving thought.

If the Oxford Movement appears in some respects to have looked back, if indeed its leaders found it difficult to distinguish, amidst the surge and confusion of the changes around them, between the works of contemporary secularism and ideas springing alone from the pure passion of justice, we must reflect that they nevertheless were seeking for the rehabilitation of the Faith in its fulness as the only anodyne for

“ . . . this strange disease of modern life,  
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,  
Its heads o’ertax’d, its palsied hearts. . . . ”<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Matthew Arnold, *The Scholar Gipsy*.

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Of their gospel of Church Revival we are entitled to draw out the implications for a Society of which the determining bias has been, not the religion which they recommended, but the worldliness which they opposed. The order so founded and formulated is collapsing, and men and women of my own generation, bred in the security of the secular tradition, stand puzzled and bewildered as they see the enormous edifice tottering. It is only as we contrast the assumptions of the modern world with those of the Catholic Revival that we may approach either an understanding of that collapse or the remotest possibility of a reconstruction.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE SOCIAL GENIUS OF THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

We have seen in our previous discussion that the Oxford Movement was primarily a reaction from the presuppositions and mental habits of its age. Unless this is clearly appreciated, it is impossible to understand its theological proclivities, and it is certainly impossible to understand its relation to the contemporary political and social movements. The Tractarians, as we have observed, were much occupied with doctrinal controversy, and it was long indeed before their Movement was free from the danger of serious persecution. These considerations must necessarily have retarded the work of drawing out the full implications of the Church Revival, and of setting it in a duly discriminated relation with the social aspirations of the moment. An intense hatred of secularism, a deep suspicion that the modern World was somehow off the right track, may have obscured from the eyes of the Oxford leaders and their immediate followers the ele-

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ments of righteousness that were in the rebellious political forces of the time.

Their position is not easy for our generation to apprehend, and it was one of much greater subtlety and complexity than is often supposed. There is, in some quarters, a notion that these men were no more than narrow, if sincere, ecclesiastics whose sole conception of the Church's function in the social order was that of maintaining the subservience of the lowly to their betters. I shall have no difficulty in completely demolishing that judgment, for it is nothing but a crude travesty of the Tractarians' thought as revealed most emphatically in their writings. Yet we have to meet evidence which seems at first sight to denote, at least in some of them, a certain aristocratic intransigence and a certain isolated narrowness of purely ecclesiastical interest.

Thus, for example, Professor Trevelyan, referring to the political reformers and particularly to the Chartists, complains that the Tractarians "denounced all those who taught the people 'to rail against their superiors.'"<sup>1</sup> And Frederick Denison Maurice seems to suggest that they conceived God as merely "the provider of a scheme for man's deliverance, or the setter-up

<sup>1</sup> Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 281.

of a Church system.”<sup>2</sup> Pusey declared that he and Maurice worshipped different Gods, and Maurice accepted the statement. And there was a further dispute between these two great men, concerning the “hopeless torments of future punishment.”<sup>3</sup>

Now, in view of all the evidence which we shall presently examine, proving beyond dispute that the Tractarians were at least aware of the immediate meaning of their own doctrines for the broader issues of conduct and social order, we must face such contrary indications as I have cited. The fundamental question here involved is that of the two orders, the “natural” and the “divine,” and of the relation between them. This we must study at greater length a little later. But we may remark at the present stage that neither Catholic doctrine, nor Latin theology in its main expression, regards those two orders as either unrelated or in essential opposition to each other. That Latin theology is marked by an insistence upon the actual strain, amounting to an unnatural separation and opposition, set up by human sin, is certainly a fact. We may say that some features of S. Augustine’s teaching produced a recurrent tendency to pass beyond the idea of an actual though unnatural separation to that of an

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Maurice*, Vol. II, p. 43, 44.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 469.

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essential unrelatedness, and that this tendency is strongly marked in the Protestant theologians of the Reformation;<sup>4</sup> but the Catholic position is clear, and the West in this respect has not actually abandoned the teaching of the earlier Greek Fathers. Born in the natural order, all men, by reason of their being "ordered to the beatific vision" are "created for incorporation" in the Church.<sup>5</sup> The appearance of mankind within the terrestrial order is proof that the terrestrial order looks toward the divine for its interpretation, and ministers to the divine purpose. And no Church can recite the Catholic creeds, without declaring the equation of the Redeemer with the Creator.

It is not difficult to understand that there may be some variety of emphasis, amongst different theological schools and in different ages, as to the measure of the effect upon the harmony and interconnection of the natural order and the divine, caused by human sin. An exaggeration in one direction produces the doctrine of total depravity and the idea of the natural world as an enemy and snare of the soul. But on the other hand, a failure to recognise the implications of

<sup>4</sup> See an interesting quotation from Francis Newman, in William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 80. James says that the Roman Church is specially remarkable for its power to pass beyond the thoughts of sin and redemption in its attitude to God.

<sup>5</sup> Maritain, *The Things That Are Not Caesar's*, pp. 4, 5.

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sin involves a confusion of the divine order with the natural order *as man has distorted it*. The line between the doctrine that this world is "potentially God's order," and the attitude of those whom William James somewhere describes as "sky-blue moralists" has to be carefully guarded in Christian theology. And Maurice, who held that the present human society is "already in God's Order and only needs to realise it,"<sup>6</sup> is not always sufficiently clear in this distinction. There arises the question as to whether the human order may reach or realise the divine by a process of evolution, or only by some act of spiritual revolution. Maurice's views imply that the process may be evolutionary. The Tractarian view necessarily supposed that it must be revolutionary, in the moral and philosophical meaning of the term.

But here we reach a complexity. The Tractarians were decidedly not in sympathy with such social projects of their time as were consciously "revolutionary" in the political sphere. The reason, however, was that they did not consider them revolutionary in the sphere that chiefly mattered. They believed them to derive from the acceptance of secular presuppositions, which they themselves could not receive as a sufficient foun-

<sup>6</sup> G. C. Binyon, *The Christian Socialist Movement in England*, pp. 114, 115.

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lation for a new social order. Moreover, their particular type of conservatism inherited the lingering mediæval parable of the body applied to society, which, with a strong Christian doctrine of equality, could yet conceive difference of functions as carrying in a secondary sense some difference of status amongst the members.<sup>7</sup> If they denounced those who taught the people "to rail against their superiors," this is no proof that the Tractarians were hide-bound political reactionaries. What they foresaw and feared was the final destruction of the idea of a corporate society with given, mutual responsibilities, and the arrival of a disordered régime in which the mutual ties and relations of men would disappear in a greedy scramble.

Mr. Binyon has said that Pusey "represents the best deals of the pre-industrial era—Christian social principles on a basis of inequality of status acquiesced in as right by all classes."<sup>8</sup> But he has to admit that even he "socialism" of Maurice, twenty years after the birth of the Oxford Movement, was conceived by him as co-existing with monarchy and aristocracy, and that the

<sup>7</sup> John of Salisbury could take S. Paul's likening of the Church as a body, and apply it to the whole mediæval society, because the mediæval conception regarded Church and State as one body in different aspects. This view persisted in the Elizabethan Settlement, and in the High Toryism of the 17th and 18th centuries.

<sup>8</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, pp. 63, 64.

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“democracy” of Charles Kingsley “accepted the existing order of society with all its grades and traditions.”<sup>9</sup>

The main consideration, however, is not whether in the opinion of the Tractarians social status seemed to be inevitably connected with social function, but in what kind of spirit and atmosphere they would have that status exist. We may find reason to conclude that their own teaching and influence involved the exaltation of the idea of function and the abrogation of the idea of status. It is one of the things they may be pardoned for not seeing, for in truth they had no time to see everything.

That their doctrine was revolutionary in the deeper sense, is proved by some of the very facts which some have taken as indicating only a narrow ecclesiasticism. For example, many would judge that the refusal of Maurice to support, as Pusey did, the attempt to bind the clergy to some affirmation upon the question of the “hopeless torments of future punishment” was proof that Maurice’s outlook was much “broader” than Pusey’s, and much more consistent with a humane and socialised presentation of the Faith. There is, however, another side of this question.

It surely is axiomatic that you cannot deny the pos-

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 81.

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sibility of ceaseless persistence in evil choice, and at the same time hold the doctrine of the freedom of the human will, unless you assume the extinction of the evil will and therefore of the evil person. But if you accept the barest possibility that some may not cease to choose evil, you must suppose that the choice implies a state which may not unreasonably be described as one of "hopeless torment"; for it is no compliment to the human soul to say that the deprivation of the vision of God will leave it permanently comfortable. The value of the practical application of the doctrine, however, is governed by two considerations. The first is, whether every human being who dies unrepentant, or without the Faith, is to be plunged at once from all the unequal opportunities of this life into endless misery, which is not Catholic doctrine or anything like it, but the obsolescent teaching of some Protestants. The second consideration is the notion as to what sort of conduct is chiefly in danger of earning such final reprobation. Obviously if the warning be addressed mainly to the poor, neglected, unchurched crowds, to men driven desperate by want, or tempted through the squalor and dreariness of their surroundings to seek some compensation in vicious courses, the doctrine may become an anti-social instrument.



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But if it is proclaimed as a warning to the rich and powerful, if the damnation of hell is freely promised to certain financiers and politicians, then surely the doctrine is of some social value. The mere rejection of the doctrine has in it no social meaning whatever. The Tractarians were not Calvinists. Holding the Catholic view, they believed that human choice had some measure of influence upon human destiny. But, on the other hand, as we shall see, they were not snobs. They would have felt no sympathy with the complaint of the Duchess of Buckingham, regarding the Methodist preachers, that "it is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl upon the earth."<sup>10</sup> Neither Newman nor Pusey nor Hurrell Froude would have been prepared to guarantee the heart of the duchess.

What the truly social application of the doctrine of eternal punishment means, is that certain social courses involve the completest spiritual disaster for those who are primarily responsible for them, and for those who profit by them and approve of them. And this is intimately associated with that prior doctrine that the process from the World as it is, to the Kingdom of God, must somehow involve some act of ethical renun-

<sup>10</sup> In a letter to Lady Huntingdon.

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ciation, some painful, struggling volition, some conversion, some crossing of an indelible line. Apart from such axioms it is impossible at once to hold a realistic view of man's conduct and history, and also to have faith in the high dignity of his calling.

The genius of the Oxford Movement cannot be fully and sympathetically estimated unless it is remembered that upon one side it had close affinities, and indeed definite connection, with the Romantic Revival. To suppose that it was no more than a religious turn given to a literary movement would be to make a very superficial judgment. But the Romantic Revival itself was more than a change from heroic couplets. It was a profound protest of the spirit of man against the secularising rationalism of the French Revolution. Its birthplace has been disputed, but it quickly affected Germany, France and England. In the last-named country it awakened to greater force and volume some tendencies already faintly present. Its essential quality was a distaste for the secularisation and commercialisation of life, a deep dissatisfaction with a narrowing of human vision to the single plane of this world.

Theodore Watts-Dunton distinguished two human attitudes to the world: the attitude of acceptance, and that of wonder; and he identified the Romantic Re-

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vival with the resurgence of the spirit of wonder.<sup>11</sup> It held a sense of mystery and romance in the common experience of life, and possessed a view of man and nature very different from that of the economists, manufacturers and politicians of the period. The object of the *Lyrical Ballads* of Coleridge and Wordsworth had been to make the supernatural appear natural and the natural to appear supernatural: that is to say, men were to be taught on the one hand to see themselves in a supernatural environment as their proper surrounding, and on the other hand to see the common things and events of this world as having reflections and repercussions in the world invisible.

The effective link between the Romantic Revival and the Oxford Movement was Samuel Taylor Coleridge. It is known that one of the Tractarian leaders, Charles Marriott, had been a serious student of Coleridge<sup>12</sup> who, for all his alleged mistiness and undoubted lack of systematic form, had very definite things to say about the current tendencies. "Coleridge," says Fr. Widdrington, "intensified the repugnance felt by Wordsworth and those who refused to be intimidated by the high priests of an arrogant political economy, toward the new in-

<sup>11</sup> "The Renaissance of Wonder in English Poetry," *Chambers' Cyclo-pædia of English Literature*, Vol. III.

<sup>12</sup> R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement*, p. 71.

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dustrialism. At a time when any interference with trade was regarded as unnecessary and mischievous, Coleridge called for the regulation of manufacture. He attacked the "superstitions of wealth" which had degraded multitudes of the population into "engines for the manufacture of new rich men." He uttered a ringing protest against the vulgarisation of life and thought induced by industrialism, and denounced the despotism of finance in government and legislation."<sup>13</sup>

When we bear in mind this account of Coleridge's influence, and remember that we have the authority of Dean Church for making the connection between him and the Oxford Movement upon the side of Church theory, we begin to see the Tractarian Movement in a somewhat neglected but nevertheless true perspective. "Coleridge's theories of the Church," says Dean Church, "were his own," but he "had lifted the subject to a very high level. He had taken the simple but all-important step of viewing the Church in its spiritual character as first and foremost and above all things essentially a religious society of divine institution, not dependent on the creation or will of man or on the privileges or honours which man might think fit to assign to it."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> P. E. T. Widdrington, *The Social Teaching of the Oxford Movement*, (C. L. A.), p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> R. W. Church, *op. cit.*

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In Coleridge and his influence on the Oxford Movement we see the Romantic Revival rising to a conception of humanity beyond the debasing judgments of the secular movements, whether of those looking for salvation through existing economic processes, or of those who sought it in political and economic revolt. We see the situation of man in the world irradiated by a supernatural light. And it was in the Oxford Movement that these perceptions were provided with the sanctions of a dogmatic theology, and the solid witness of a corporate and continuous Church.

The Tractarians did not cast their thought in the mould of social science. The one outstanding clerical sociologist of the previous generation, the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus,<sup>15</sup> had not seemed to reach very genial conclusions; and at all events the Oxford theologians had a definitely conceived task which did not include a scientific study of economics. Yet their movement not only exhibited the spiritual basis of a great Christian humanism; but its several leaders, each in his own way, propounded some criticism of the existing social conditions, some denunciation of current injustice and oppression, some assertion of a fundamental conflict between the aims of industrial capitalism and the aims

<sup>15</sup> Malthus (1766-1834) published his *Essay on the Principle of Population* in 1798.

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of the Christian religion, or some reminder of the Church's right and duty to declare her true nature in a passionate concern for human welfare. The documentary proof<sup>16</sup> of this may possibly surprise those who have thought of the original Tractarians as a group of devout Churchmen engaged, amidst the dreaming quiet of Oxford, upon theological and ecclesiastical scholarship alone.

The first thing to be observed in the Oxford leaders, in respect of social consciousness, is their personal attitude to poor and humble folk. This is a characteristic of great importance. We have had philanthropists in sufficient numbers who have claimed to be lovers of man, but have evinced little desire for personal contact with men, below a certain social level. The nineteenth century was crowded with reformers who had no knowledge of the poor and for whom their own butlers had to stand as the inadequate symbols of demos. It is a proof of spiritual freedom underlying an intellectual conviction, if a man brought up in surroundings of wealth and refinement, accustomed to the habits and tones of what used to be called polite society, can meet upon natural and unembarrassed terms the poorest and humblest: can speak with them without conscious su-

<sup>16</sup> For the collection of the following extracts I am chiefly indebted to the Rev. P. E. T. Widdrington and Miss Ruth Kenyon, J. P.

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periority on his side, or shyness and awkwardness on theirs: can over-reach with ease all accidental and artificial barriers and find in labouring men and toiling women, the mystical essence of a humanity common to us all.

This, I think, is an almost exclusively Christian gift, as valuable when it enables a person to surpass barriers of cultural and intellectual inequality, as when it obliterates social divisions due to difference of class or wealth; but apparently it was a gift not commonly displayed in England a hundred years ago. It was a mark of the most eminent of the Oxford leaders. It was specially characteristic of Pusey, a man of considerable material fortune and prodigious learning; but in John Keble, an acknowledged ornament of the great, proud University of Oxford, it shone with a spiritual beauty. To this we have the testimony of Isaac Williams, who, as an undergraduate at Oxford, was invited to spend some time with Keble in the country, and found the occasion the miraculous turning-point of his life. Of all his admiration and amazement at Keble's character, perhaps the greatest was aroused by his discovery of Keble's ordinary attitude to poor country folk:

At Harrow, as at other public schools, the poor were never spoken of but by some contemptuous term—

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looked upon as hateful boors, to be fought with or cajoled for political objects; but for them to be looked upon with tender regard and friendship more than the rich, and in some cases even referred to as instructors of the wisdom which God teaches—this was a new world to me.<sup>17</sup>

A critic may desire to remind us that behind such friendship lay the thesis of "Christian Social principles based on inequality of status"; but it surely is difficult to believe that any such reservation was conspicuously present in the mind of John Keble. At all events, his human love was the spiritual basis of a social edifice vastly different from that reared by the secular economics of industrialism, or likely to be reared by the secular economics of collectivism. For this was human relationship in the light and warmth of the Incarnation and of the sacred fellowship of the redeemed. Keble, whether he consciously considered it or not, was a man who approached all human relations as if they carried at least the potentiality of the Communion of Saints. And that is the only view of human relations which can successfully govern industry or politics.

It was in accordance with this spirit that the Tractarians displayed an intense concern for the relation of

<sup>17</sup> Isaac Williams' Autobiography. See also Isaac Williams, *Heroes of the Catholic Revival*, (C. L. A.).



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the unshepherded multitudes of the poor to the Church. As early as 1833, Hurrell Froude had written to Newman:

It has lately come into my head that the present state of things in England makes an opening for reviving the monastic system. I think of putting the view forward under the title of "Project for reviving religion in great towns."

In 1857, Pusey was still revolving the growing problem of bringing religion to the masses.

The Church herself ought to debate upon remedies and should not leave to individual effort the work to be done. We need missions among the poor of our towns: organised bodies of clergy living among them; licensed preachers in the streets and lanes of our cities; brotherhoods or guilds which should replace socialism; or sisterhoods of mercy, for any office of mercy which our Lord wills to be exercised towards His members, or towards His outcast ones whom love, for the love of Him, might bring back to Him. We need clergy to penetrate our mines, to migrate with our emigrants, to shift with our shifting population, to grapple with our manufacturing system as the Apostles did with the slave system of the ancient world, to secure in Christ's name the Deltas of our population which the overflowing, overspreading stream of our English race is continually casting up.

Beautiful as is the relation of the parish priest to his

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flock, lovely as are the village homes of our village pastors, and gentle as are the influences radiating from those who

“Point to heaven and lead the way,”

yet there is now an appalling need of further organisation for a harder, more self-denying, self-sacrificing warfare, if, by God’s help, we would wrest from the principalities and powers of evil those portions of His Kingdom of which, while unregarded by the Church, they have taken full possession.<sup>18</sup>

It is not claimed that these passages prove more than that Froude and Pusey were at least alive to the Church’s duty of evangelising the crowds, and combating the worst effects of the social system with her spiritual remedies. They do not display, so far, a consciousness of conflict between the very structure and aims of society and the structure and aims of the Church. Yet it was primarily important that the need for keeping religion close to the people should be felt. Again it was important that those sins characteristic of the successful in such a social system, sins which the system encouraged and rewarded, should be denounced, even though it were the fact that the evils of the system which provoked them remained unanalysed. And it was Newman who mercilessly exposed

<sup>18</sup> E. B. Pusey, *Councils of the Church*, pp. 4, 5.

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them, in his famous sermons at S. Mary's. According to James Mozley, Newman's sermons were deeply marked by ethical influence, and he had a marvellous faculty for understanding and flagellating sins to which he himself felt no temptation, "avarice, fortune-getting, amassing capital, and so on."<sup>19</sup>

But we may now pass on to show that the Tractarians were indeed conscious of social injustice and of the Church's duty in face of the conditions which had then arisen. In the first place it may be worth while to recall Newman's very emphatic assertion of the Church's right to deal with the affairs of this world:

... since there is a popular misconception that Christians, and especially the clergy as such, have no concern in temporal affairs, it is expedient to take every opportunity of formally denying the position, and demanding formal proof of it. In truth, the Church was framed for the express purpose of interfering or (as irreligious men would say) meddling with the world.<sup>20</sup>

Dr. Pusey, at any rate, did not hesitate so to meddle with the social assumptions of the comfortable classes, as some of his sermons bear witness:

Covetousness, says the scripture, is idolatry, and yet

<sup>19</sup> Quoted, R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement*, pp. 121, 122.

<sup>20</sup> *Arians of the Fourth Century*, Chap. III, sec. 2. Cf. *Tracts for the Times*, I and II.

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this is the very end and aim of what men do, the ground of their undertakings, to keep and enlarge their wealth. The spirit of enterprise affects all; it is the very air men live on. Prosperity is their idol, the very end to which they refer all other ends; and what is this but their God?<sup>21</sup>

This sounds not unlike a denunciation of the acquisitive, capitalist system by Max Beer, or Mr. R. H. Tawney. And again, in his sermon on *The Sin of Judas*:

He took of the common stock for his private ends more than his due share . . . if in our eager haste to heap more comfort to ourselves we beat down the wages of the poor, in order to cheapen or multiply our own indulgence, what else do we do than defraud Christ? . . . Covetous now, a devil hereafter.

In the sermon on *Almsgiving*,<sup>22</sup> Pusey actually offers an indictment of the industrial system which, though ethical in its terms, shows beyond dispute that his mind was engaged upon the contrast between the Christian ethics and the economic processes:

Doubtless Dives encouraged the manufacturers of Tyre and Sidon, and the weavers of Palestine, while he

<sup>21</sup> Sermon on *The Danger of Riches*. Such utterances are very numerous in the sermons of Pusey. Cf. also his *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, for many condemnations of the social effects of greed.

<sup>22</sup> *University Sermons*.

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bound not up the sores of Lazarus. . . . If he were uncared for, it was that there were not enough Dives to give employment to the poor. Miserable, transparent, flimsy hypocrisy. Were the employment of the poor our end, would they be less employed in manufacturing comforts for themselves than in weaving luxuries for us? . . . A reckless, fraudulent competition, whose aim is to cheapen every luxury and vanity, in order that those at ease may spend on fresh accumulated luxuries and vanities what they withhold from the poor, lowers the prices of things we crave for by cutting down the wages of the poor.

Here Pusey places his finger upon the fact that capitalist industrialism was taking too large a proportion of the product of industry from the workers. No more than any man of his time could he foresee the terrible Nemesis which, later, would overtake the system in a world in which the wheels of industry were strangely slowed, and the workless were numbered by millions, and all men were afraid—because the workers could not buy the products of their own labour.

There are two further passages from Pusey's sermons to which I must call attention:

Year by year is opening up some fresh mine of wretchedness; some new form of decay and misery produced by the crying sin of our wealthy nation, a reckless heaping up of riches, careless of the bodies and souls of those by whose toil they are gathered. And yet

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we seem to be learning the extent of our ills, rather than how to remove them.<sup>23</sup>

These are words of prophetic denunciation; but in his sermon on *Christianity Without a Cross*,<sup>24</sup> he shows a firm grasp of the necessary and regulative relation of religion with the secular sphere.

Christianity has a great task before it to make the Kingdoms of this world the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; but it is not because they are civilised, but because, retaining an outward civilisation, they are fast decaying and becoming uncivilised. . . . Christianity has not "to fight tooth and nail with civilisation"; but by the grace of God to ensoul it.

In view of such utterances, the assertion that Pusey had no interest in anything that was not "directly, technically religious"<sup>25</sup> must be considered false, although there was probably no subject ever considered by him without some reference to its religious bearings. But that is precisely what we are now attempting to illustrate. He was indeed preoccupied with religion; but it was a religion which, as the years went by, was seen to connect itself with very large fields of life.

It was this attitude which in the earliest days of the Oxford Movement appeared in Hurrell Froude's vig-

<sup>23</sup> *Parochial Sermons*.

<sup>25</sup> von Hügel's *Letters*, p. 254.

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orous rejection of the fashionable social standards. He denounced the "old Tory humbug,"<sup>26</sup> by which he meant the supposition that the Tory Party was the political expression of the Church. Nor would he tolerate the Church's acceptance of the secular social canons, "the gentleman heresy" as he called it. Writing to Keble he says of some others:

They would be contented certainly with a state of things short of what I would ever acquiesce in, and have the old prejudices about the expediency of having the clergy Gentlemen, *i. e.*, fit to mix in good society, and about prizes to tempt men of good talent into the Church, and the whole train of stuff which follows these assumptions.<sup>27</sup>

The following year he is complaining of some person that he

. . . seems to think anything better than an open rupture with the State, as sure to entail loss of caste on the clergy. Few men can receive the saying that the clergy have no need to be gentlemen.<sup>28</sup>

In a letter to his father he declares:

<sup>26</sup> "He was a High Tory of the Cavalier stamp, and was disgusted with the Toryism of the opponents of the Reform Bill." Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, p. 25.

<sup>27</sup> Letter to Keble, Aug. 10, 1833. See "Hurrell Froude," *Heroes of the Catholic Revival*, (C. L. A.).

<sup>28</sup> Letter to Keble, Feb. 8, 1834.

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The notion that a priest must be a gentleman is a stupid exclusive protestant fancy, and ought to be exploded.<sup>29</sup>

And to Newman:

Church discipline, too, though only affecting the clergy, will be something, as it will remove the only good objection to the ordination of people below the caste of Gentlemen.<sup>30</sup>

Froude saw in the Church of England of his day a class Church which he believed to be in this respect utterly opposed to the meaning of the Gospel. As early as 1832, James Mozley wrote of him:

Froude is daily becoming more vehement in his ideas, and is launching out around him on all sides. The country aristocracy is now the chief object of his vituperation . . . and he thinks the Church will eventually have to rely on the very poor classes, as has been the case when it has yielded the strongest influence.

From 1829 until Froude's death in 1836, he and Newman had been in the closest association, and his influence upon Newman was great. The latter, with his aristocratic predilection, had much to learn from

<sup>29</sup> Aug. 22, 1834.

<sup>30</sup> Jan., 1835. "Froude," said J. B. Mozley, "has imported from France notions about a Democratical High Church School." See a reference to Lamennais, *infra*.



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his ardent companion concerning the real social bent of the Faith. And, writing of him long afterwards in the *Apologia*, he says:

. . . he had that strong hold of first principles and that keen perception of their value that he was comparatively indifferent to the revolutionary action which would attend their application to a given state of things.

Newman learned from Froude to look away from the secular order of their time for the true support of the Church. It may astonish some minds to reflect that a year after the Reform Bill agitation, in which an Archbishop had been mobbed and a bishop's house had been burned down by an angry crowd, at a time when the popular movements were heading against the Church as against the very stronghold of repression, Newman himself wrote:

If we look into history, whether it is the age of the Apostles, S. Ambrose's or S. Thomas à Becket's, still the people were the fulcrum of the Church's power. So they may be again.<sup>81</sup>

He added, in humorous vein, that his correspondent might therefore expect to see them all "cautious, long-headed, unflinching Radicals." But upon this point Fr.

<sup>81</sup> Letter to R. T. Wilson, Sept., 1833.

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Widdrington has raised the pertinent question, why it was never actually possible for the Oxford Movement to attempt in England the policy of Lacordaire and Lamennais in France, the policy of baptising, as it were, or in Pusey's term, "ensouling," the liberal movement. Fr. Widdrington argues that it was possible in France and impossible in England, because in France, in spite of the Revolution, the Church was a reality and the Church of the people; while in England it was "a phantom" and the Church of a class, which had no hold on the new population of the industrial areas. Thus, he concludes, "In France it was possible to separate liberalism from a secular philosophy: in England it was not." Yet he adds that "history will probably confirm Pius IX's opinion of liberalism, rather than that of Lamennais."<sup>32</sup>

It no doubt is fruitless to surmise what might have been the result, had the Tractarians so addressed themselves to the liberalism of their contemporary England. The Roman Church, through Papal encyclicals, continued to exhibit a profound distrust of the secular liberal advances; and while the Tractarians were upon the whole strongly anti-Roman,<sup>33</sup> they felt the same strong repugnance to liberalism. It must now be evi-

<sup>32</sup> P. E. T. Widdrington, *Christendom*, June, 1932.

<sup>33</sup> Ollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 12.

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dent to us that their attacks upon social injustice rested upon other conscious sanctions than those of the Radicals; and their adumbration of an alternative social order was, in fact, not chiefly concerned with any earthly order for its own sake, but was the result of the renewed vision of the Church as the Divine Society.

Nowhere is this more clearly expressed than in W. G. Ward's neglected and almost forgotten book, *The Ideal of a Christian Church*.<sup>34</sup> That involved and cumbersome work was condemned for its Romanism,<sup>35</sup> and might well have been condemned for its style. But Ward had not derived his social sympathies and aims from Roman sources, for he himself says, speaking of the need for an adequate moral and social philosophy, "In looking for guidance in that quarter, where my own eyes are always first turned when in need of spiritual wisdom, I mean the Church of Rome, one cannot but painfully feel that on such subjects as have been discussed we find there at present no sufficient model to follow."

He desired the Church to produce "a full and systematic moral theology," in which "much more ground should be covered than is covered by Roman works on

<sup>34</sup> See an important paper by Miss Ruth Kenyon, J. P., *Ideal Ward and a Catholic Sociology*, which is closely followed here. *Christendom*, March, 1932.

<sup>35</sup> R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement*, pp. 321-331.

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moral theology." He considered that the Church's casuistry should be employed on all the secular occupations of men, and that the Church should declare authoritatively "what sort of causes a barrister ought to plead, and what sort of books a book-seller ought to sell." He wished for a judgment from the Church on such questions as "whether the principles upon which our Indian Empire has been acquired, and on which it is retained, are justifiable on grounds of Christian morality." But Ward saw that such a moral theology must issue in a thoroughgoing investigation of the whole theory and practice of social and economic life. The following passage is a quite remarkable plea for a Christian Sociology, seeing that it appeared in 1844:

Under our present circumstances it is hardly less necessary that some Christianly-minded and most tenderly compassionate, if at the same time clear-headed and precise, thinker should betake himself to the study of political economy. It is merely idle to suppose that we can really and permanently benefit the poor in their temporal relations unless we bring all the lights of science and system to bear on the subject.

Noting a statement made by John Stuart Mill, that "nearly the whole of the energy of character which exists in highly civilised societies concentrates itself in the pursuit of [wealth] . . . The energies of the mid-

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dle classes are almost confined to money-getting,"<sup>36</sup>  
Ward exclaims:

With what unremitting urgency and intentness of purpose will not an ideal Church oppose herself to this most baneful and anti-Christian tendency. When we bear in mind the appalling denunciation against wealth which we read in the Scriptures, how marked and authoritative an attitude should we not expect such a Church to assume in her dealing with this class of her children.

Surveying the abominable industrial conditions then obtaining, he goes on to say that an ideal Church, if placed in charge of a country where such conditions existed, would forbid her children to undertake employment in which "whether from the kind or amount of toil the leading of a Christian life would be impossible."

What employment would she not make of her spiritual censures, in directing them against the oppression of the poor: what loud and clamorous appeals to our civil rulers, what addresses to those of her children who are influential in a worldly point of view.

He continues to plead for a scientific social study, animated by Christian purpose, and hopes that brotherhoods and sisterhoods may perform the task of col-

<sup>36</sup> *London and Westminster Review*, April, 1836.

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lecting "data which, with our present machinery, cannot possibly be supplied."

It is perfectly conceivable, for all that I know it may be quite true, that the existing race of political economists have been shallow and superficial; but to deny that there *is* a science on the subject, and one closely concerned with human happiness, in such a state of society as our own, this is one of the most extraordinary allegations that has been made in our age, an age so fertile in extraordinary allegations.

Ward will have nothing to do with wrong motives for doing right things, and warns the Church against them:

If in urging on the rich the duty of educating the poor she lay her principal stress, not on the duty of repairing in some very slight degree their most wicked negligence in time past, but, instead of this, on the unutterably base motive, that unless the poor be rightly educated the rich cannot hope for secure enjoyment of their earthly goods; in such a case, she would distinctly imply that the rich may without grievous sin make their own enjoyment the main object of their dealings with the poor; and she would thus overtly and directly *sanction* that principle which it is a sin and shame to her that she does not *denounce*.

There is a final passage which, Miss Kenyon seems to think, may possibly be intended to express some

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impatience with the Oxford Movement itself in respect of its social vision. Its phrases are clearly addressed to the Church as a whole, and obviously it would have been extremely unjust to charge the leading Tractarians with "toleration" and "admiration" of the "existing system." Ward, I take it, is chastising the clergy and laity who were content to have Church and society unchanged; but it may well have been true that numbers of professed adherents to the Tractarian cause failed to see the profound changes required. Reminding his readers that for ten years the mission of the Church, as from God and not from the state, had been proclaimed, he says:

When members of a Church which has thus basely betrayed her trust find it difficult to conceive that some among their brethren can, without the most serious moral delinquency, abhor and denounce the system under which such betrayal was possible; when they accuse us of violence, eccentricity and paradox, because we cannot consider a Church pure which neither bears witness against wealth nor protects poverty, I can only say that our hatred of the existing system cannot more offend them than their toleration, nay admiration, of it perplexes and astonishes us.<sup>37</sup>

This surely sounds more like the authentic voice of the Oxford Movement in protest against the whole sys-

<sup>37</sup> The relevant sections in Ward's book are Chaps. II and VI.

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tem of Erastianism within an industrialised and mammon-worshipping secular society, than a criticism of the Movement itself. It only says in terms of greater violence what we have found in the writings of Froude, Newman, and Pusey. And certainly Pusey wrote of *The Ideal of a Christian Church*, "It makes one wince . . . feel how deep our wounds are, and that we shall get no good until they are probed to the bottom."<sup>38</sup>

We have here, I think, a considerable body of evidence, drawn not from one or two of the Tractarians, but from several of the most prominent of their company, and covering their privately and publicly expressed opinions over a period of many years, sufficient to establish certain clear propositions. Amongst these men there was a sense of mystical brotherhood with the poor, that carried them far beyond the consideration of "status," and far beyond the attitude of ordinary philanthropy. It became with them a conviction that there was a definite contradiction between the principles of the secular organisation and the principles of Catholic Christianity. And they conceived that upon this subject the Church had not only the right, but the urgent duty, of speaking. Theirs was not the conception which Mr. Binyon attributes to the Evangelicals, that the ser-

<sup>38</sup> Liddon's *Life of Pusey*. Vol. II, p. 415.



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vice of the poor is a way of gaining heaven. The thought which was struggling in their minds was more profound, more consistent with the Gospel, more in line with the highest aims of the historic Church. It was all this because it arose from that corporate consideration of salvation, and the idea of the Church as human sociality redeemed, which belong to the intrinsic nature of Catholic theology. What they saw with greater or less definiteness, but with a persistence that would never allow them to revert to mere ecclesiasticism, was that the Church, being the communion of the faithful in their Saviour and the world's Saviour; the Church, being the Body of Christ, must necessarily reject and condemn all methods of human association, all political and economic arrangements, which assumed that mankind could realise its own potentiality while neglecting those foundations upon which the Church itself was built.

This predisposition of the originators of the Revival in Oxford gave to the Movement a bias and a character which have remained to mark it ever since, where it has retained the fulness of its first inspiration. From the time when Priscilla Sellon, blessed and encouraged by Dr. Pusey, commenced her work in the stews of Devonport, up to the present day, the Catholic Move-

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ment has always been discovered amongst the poor and outcast. The names of Dolling, Lowder, Mackonochie, Stanton, Burn, Wainwright and a host of others, remind us of that recovery of the mystical value of a man which the Oxford Movement helped to awaken, and of the Church's duty to perceive and rescue it amidst all the squalor and misery of a cruel, godless system.

In the story of Fr. Mackonochie and Fr. Lowder, and the disgraceful riots at S. George's-in-the-East, we come upon an interesting illustration of the inwardness of the work of some of the so-called ritualists of the slums. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould, who was an eye-witness of the tumults, observed a number of Jews among the rioters. "There could be," he says, "no mistaking the Hebrew cast of countenance of many of the young men who created the disturbances."<sup>39</sup> The uninformed may wonder at this Semitic interest in the domestic affairs of the English Church, until the explanation is forthcoming that Lowder and Mackonochie had denounced the system of sweated labour practised chiefly by Jewish employers in the neighbourhood.<sup>40</sup> In scores of parishes the priests of the Catholic Revival have gone looking for lost sheep. Driven from Oxford, long ostrac-

<sup>39</sup> S. Baring-Gould, *The Church Revival*, p. 235.

<sup>40</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

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cised from the fashionable and wealthy places, opposed by the Court,<sup>41</sup> the movement went into the slums, and wrote a shining page in the record of the service of humanity. Incidentally it collected, or had forced upon it, such "data" as W. G. Ward had desired.

But we must notice, too, that its political orientation was changing. Canon Ollard says that such men of "the second generation" as Dolling and Stanton were "wholly out of sympathy with Conservative politics."<sup>42</sup> This is not a history of the social consequences, either theoretical or practical, of the Oxford Movement, but a study of its implications; but the implications must to some extent be deduced from the progress of the Movement, and it is true that a generation after its departure from Oxford it had ceased to own any general allegiance to conservatism and had yet drawn no nearer to the now fairly innocuous and vague aspirations of later English liberalism. The growth of the political influence of Labour seemed to offer a much more attractive alliance, and I have known an English diocese in which at a certain General Election, almost the whole of the Anglo-Catholic clergy supported the

<sup>41</sup> W. J. Sparrow Simpson, *The Anglo-Catholic Revival*, pp. 21, 132, 142.

<sup>42</sup> Ollard, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

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Labour cause. It is, however, very doubtful if such an alliance will ever be accomplished even in the sense that Anglo-Catholics will usually be found on the Labour side. The truth is that the more seriously modern Catholics have taken up the study of sociology, the less satisfaction have they found in any of the political parties, which all alike bear upon them the imprint of dead circumstance.

Behind this transition lies the whole story of the association of the Catholic movement with successive Anglican societies which have sought to provide the Church with some expression of social consciousness. It is no part of my task to follow the course of that history.<sup>43</sup> What I have to point out is that it at length issued in a return to the Tractarian foundations. This is no euphemism for a decline of social conviction, but means, as some of us would hold, that Anglo-Catholic sociological thought has returned to its native direction. Thus I am compelled to differ somewhat from Mr. Binyon's view of the value of the Maurician influence upon the social interpretation of the Catholic doctrine. Maurice and Kingsley undoubtedly assisted to deepen in Catholics, as in Churchmen of all schools, a sense

<sup>43</sup> G. C. Binyon, *The Christian Socialist Movement in England*, and M. B. Reckitt, *Faith and Society* deal with the history. Mr. Reckitt sets forth with force and fulness the grounds of the return to a Catholic sociology.

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of social responsibility. But I regard it as probable that, with all the wisdom and nobility of Maurice's thought, some elements of its influence, at least as interpreted in certain quarters, helped to inaugurate and prolong the fruitless experiment of seeking in programmes of secular provenance the only possible sociological embodiment of the Catholic Faith. It was a common saying, "Christianity is the religion of which socialism is the practice." It is a possible assertion, perhaps, only so long as both terms are nebulously conceived.

At all events, the Anglo-Catholic movement in England, in the institution of its annual Summer School of Sociology,<sup>44</sup> has definitely embarked upon the attempt to outline a sociology upon Catholic foundations, and has thus withdrawn from the tendency to rely for its political and economic guidance upon the conclusions of secular thinkers. It was this movement back to the Catholic basis that called into being the *League of the Kingdom of God*.

There are two ways of estimating the relation between Tractarian theology and all that may properly be included under the head of sociology. It may be argued that, as Catholic theology, it affords a sufficiently sure

<sup>44</sup> An account of the progress of the School's thought during the years 1928-1930 is given in *The Catholic Faith and the Industrial Order*, by Ruth Kenyon.

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basis for a structure of corporate social life, the fundamental principles of which lie in the doctrinal teaching, of which the social implications have to be deduced and shaped in the light of thought and experience, with every detail eventually in living harmony with the religious dogmas. This position does not exclude the possibility of contributions from various sources being assimilated under the governing religio-social principles of the Catholic Faith. Or it may be said that the Tractarian theology was itself incapable of making contact with the real social needs of the modern world or of providing a sociological basis, until it was enlarged, transmuted and re-interpreted by other influences; and that it was these latter, of which the chief was the philosophical and theological thought of Frederick Denison Maurice, that in reality provided the genuine social consciousness of the Catholic Movement in the English Church. This latter argument appears to be one of the major theses of Mr. Binyon's interesting and informative book, *The Christian Socialist Movement in England*.

In view of such evidence as we have adduced, this thesis seems scarcely to accord with the facts about the Tractarians themselves. It cannot be maintained that anything that can be called a sociology is to be found

in their writings; but that they produced germinal ideas and influences which might be capable of autochthonous development from their own principles, and that their whole conception of Church revival carried with it in their minds thoughts and dreams of a social revival, are propositions which it is certainly feasible to hold. It is because I am of such opinion, that I am unready to accept the conclusion of Mr. Binyon, that it was Maurice's influence which gave to the Tractarian movement a valid basis for a sociology. It seems to me to have deflected Christian social thought into channels which might have carried it too far from its distinctive origins in a revealed religion of redemption.

Mr. Binyon does honour to the Tractarians for their refusal to allow religion to be tested by the Benthamite challenge, and the "soulless criterion of usefulness," and for "asserting the place and authority in its own right of Religion in human life."<sup>45</sup> But he permits himself to speak of "the Calvinistic and Tractarian limitations and dilutions" of Christian theology, and regards the Oxford Movement as sharing with the Roman Church and the Protestant reformers "the perversions of the Latin, Augustinian theology," or of what he calls "unnatural religion." To this he opposes the theology of

<sup>45</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

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the earlier Greek Fathers, and he regards Maurice as having interpreted that theology for modern thought.

The main differences between Greek and Latin theological types are these. Athanasian theology is regarded as setting out with the idea of God's creatorship and man's creaturely relation to Him as fundamental. Thus the idea of original goodness is not allowed to be eclipsed by the doctrine of original sin, though the latter is of course accepted. The divine is perceived not merely in a "plan of salvation" and the historic incidents accompanying its unfolding, and God's voice is heard not only in the Church which preaches and ministers salvation to men. The Holy Spirit may therefore move and inspire men in and through their secular avocations and cohesions, for there is indeed nothing intrinsically secular in the sense of being outside the divine uses.

The Augustinian theology, on the other hand, regarded by Mr. Binyon as characteristic of all historic Western Christianity from S. Augustine's time up to the nineteenth century, fastens upon the fact of sin for its starting-point in the estimate of man and the world, and regards the whole human-divine relation from that standpoint. It is, therefore, of necessity, primarily ecclesiastical. Mr. Binyon considers that it had "an in-



capacity for metaphysics," and that it therefore limited religion to "those apprehensions and phases of it which arise out of the relation between human sin and Divine Righteousness"; whereas "a true theology finds room also for those apprehensions of Religion which arise out of the relation between Divine Eternity and Self-Existence and human finitude and creatureliness."<sup>46</sup>

Mr. Binyon discovers the influence of Latin theology in the Tractarians. He thinks "in spite of some evidence that other views sometimes occupied their minds, that, for the most part, the supernatural character of the Church made public life, in their eyes, an alien, secular, hostile region, rather than a field for Christian action; that the Sacraments, for them, so far from creating a sacramental view of nature and society had the opposite effect; that their corporate solidarity was that of the religious world, and that their historic continuity linked them only to the Church of the past."<sup>47</sup>

Having in mind the many passages from the actual writings of the Tractarians which I have quoted at such length, I submit that if Mr. Binyon's account of them is true, they must have been a singularly muddle-

<sup>46</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 64. This judgment does not account for the practical connection of Charles Marriott with a co-operative experiment in Oxford, in opposition to the evils of "competition." Marriott was a very typical Tractarian.

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headed set of people. But it is possible that it is not they who are to be held responsible for the confusion. It is possible that too marked an antithesis has been made between Greek and Latin theology. For, to take a single point, I suppose it would be difficult to discover a nobler "apprehension" of religion arising out of "the relation between Divine Eternity and Self-Existence and human finitude and creatureliness" than is to be found on the very first page of S. Augustine's *Confessions*. And as for the naturalism and humanism of Greek theology, we remember that it did not prevent S. Ignatius from exclaiming, "Stop your ears when any one speaks unto you apart from Jesus Christ."<sup>48</sup> Latin theology may have been concentrated upon the facts of sin and redemption; but it availed to turn the chaos of the Dark Ages into the mediæval civilisation, as deliberate and as successful an example of social achievement as anything that has since happened. Moreover, the New Testament itself is quite considerably concerned with the facts of sin and redemption, and it is an old-fashioned and a false reading which makes the chief burden, even of the Synoptic Gospels, the "prophetic" teaching of Jesus.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Epistle to the Trallians*, c. ix.

<sup>49</sup> See, e.g., Sir E. Hoskyns and Noel Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament*.

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But we must come to more basic considerations. No Christian theology has ever really left out of sight the fact of God's creatorship, the original ground of human existence in the divine purpose, or the original goodness of man, in the sense that he is at least "ordered," in Maritain's phrase, "to the beatific vision." To place Western Catholicism under a common condemnation with Calvinism for its treatment of these elements of Christian doctrine is to fall into hopeless confusion. The Latin Church may at times have allowed the thought of God as Judge to overshadow other truths, although William James found that it was not in the Roman Church, but amongst Protestants, that this tendency was to be found.<sup>50</sup> But obviously, no theology can have an intelligible doctrine of sin at all, unless it conceive sin as a perversion of man's true nature. To say that man is by his created constitution and proper nature a sinner, is to utter meaningless words; for sin is culpable, but man cannot be blamed for being what he has been created. In such a situation, his noblest attitude to God would be:

Oh Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin  
Beset the Road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not with Predestination round  
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

<sup>50</sup> See footnote 4, p. 51.

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Oh, Thou, who man of baser Earth didst make,  
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;  
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man  
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!<sup>51</sup>

Latin theology had a doctrine of sin which left man a responsible and significant existence. Yet if the fact of sin, as a perversion of man's true nature, be admitted, it is necessarily a fact of enormous importance, and one which must affect the entire field of the divine human relation. Original goodness may be a fact, but Christian theology would be an entirely different thing if the fact of original goodness had not to be seen constantly in company with the other fact of original sin. It thus becomes impossible to conceive the rehabilitation of society by an evolutionary process upon a single plane, for sin is not an evolutionary term and implies man's relation with two planes, the natural and the supernatural. But if redemption also be a fact, producing its own social renewal in a visible Body, it must surely follow that the rehabilitation of society must stand in close and constant relation with the historic facts of the Incarnation and the Church.

It seems, then, that to agree that the Tractarians "centred attention on dogmas, sacramental and doc-

<sup>51</sup> E. Fitzgerald, *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, due, however, to Fitzgerald's misapprehension of Omar's meaning.

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trinal, to at least the partial exclusion of ethical consideration" and that they "so emphasised hierarchical traditions as to divert investigation to Restoration, Mediaeval and Patristic channels, neglecting all creative work on the life of Jesus or on the Apostolic period,"<sup>52</sup> surely is to commit oneself to a series of highly dubitable or irrelevant propositions. That the Tractarians allowed dogma to obscure ethics is simply untrue. But if an ethico-social structure is to be based upon a redemptive revelation, then dogma becomes of immense importance. To say that they were so interested in the hierarchical tradition that they neglected other important subjects is irrelevant, unless one intends to condemn the actual scope of their work as a thing not worth so great expenditure of labour. But if there is such a thing as a visible and continuous Divine Society, and if the historic Church is that Society, then the hierarchical tradition becomes immensely important.

At the period in which the Oxford Movement arose, it was a requirement of desperate urgency that the Catholic idea of the Church should be revived,<sup>53</sup> for apparently there was no other way of saving the Church

<sup>52</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 60. This is the estimate of an evangelical writer. Binyon thinks there is some weight in it.

<sup>53</sup> As Mr. Binyon admits, p. 61.

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of England. The validity of orthodoxy and the continuity of the Church had to be vindicated before anything else could be done. And the Tractarians can be condemned only if it can be shown that, doing a work so essential, they regarded it as complete, and looked upon the Church as a sphere isolated from the world and without significance for the world's affairs.

We may regard it as adequately demonstrated that this was not their position. The dogmas of sin and redemption around which their "Latin" theology is said to have moved, certainly involve the assumption that the corporate life of man cannot be truly sustained apart from relation with the redemptive energy revealed in a particular line of historic events; and the world as yet has produced no evidence that this assumption is false. But this does not imply that those dogmas are incapable of a direct social application. It does not mean that the redeemed society is limited to the activity of celebrating its own redemption in worship, and is not *as a redeemed society* to perform the normal functions of mankind in its terrestrial environment. It surely implies that the whole of human life needs to be transferred to the redemptive basis, rebuilt upon the Manger and the Cross, baptised at the Font,

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consolidated and nourished at the Altar. It does not imply either a religious or an economic individualism; and it does not involve a false "otherworldiness."

There is, indeed, great danger in attempting to found a sociology upon a theology which does *not* place the dogmas of sin and redemption in the foreground. It must not be forgotten that one great difference between Greek and Latin theology is that one came after the other, with a fuller experience of the possibility of heresy. Augustinian thought was largely shaped in controversy with Pelagianism, which is never more than cold comfort for the battered and broken and is indeed sheer individualism. And the Augustinian emphasis is equally necessary as against the modern heresy of Progressivism. Social evil has to be accounted for. There can be no restoration of society until we have confronted that, in man, which is the defection from the social principle. Social evil is either a stage in the realisation of the social good, or it is the contradiction of the social good which will not issue in its opposite. If it is the latter, its root is sin, the misdirection of choice. If it is but a preliminary stage of an evolution toward the Good Society, there is no use in Catholics or any other school of thought denouncing it. If it is the effect of sin, no sociology can afford to give to a

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dogma of sin and redemption other than a central position in its thought.

To overlook this is, as Fr. Demant has finely said, "to relapse into the very liberalism, evolutionism, progressivism and naturalism against which Catholicism has always stood as a monument of realism. . . . It would be to repeat the error of the eighteenth century, carried over by the nineteenth century, and accept the perverted Rousseauesque appropriation of the natural law unbalanced by the doctrine of sin which in the mind of the Christian ages was the other pole of the soul's problem."<sup>54</sup> Surely it must be clear that the truest, most realistic basis for social reform or revolution is a doctrine that an existing order is morally culpable and is bound up with selfishness and the misappropriation of life. And that indeed is what gives to the doctrine of Western Christendom its sanity and force. It does not deny the rightful place of the natural functions of society; but it claims that the Church has always the right to interfere in their process, *ratione peccati*.<sup>55</sup>

Mr. Binyon claims that it was the grafting of Maurician theology upon Tractarian institutionalism that

<sup>54</sup> V. A. Demant, "The Philosophic Basis of a Christian Sociology," *Christendom*, September, 1932.

<sup>55</sup> Maritain, *The Things That Are Not Caesar's*, pp. 9, 10.



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brought a living and intelligent social consciousness to the Catholic Revival. Maurice was a great and good man, and a profound thinker. He had no taste for a narrow ecclesiasticism, and he was eager to discover the widest application of the Gospel. But his aptitude for "broadening" theology led him to overlook the importance of certain strategic theological positions, and to undervalue the Augustinian contribution. In the Catholic tradition, that had been balanced by a valuation of the whole sphere of humane culture, as in the Protestant, and specially the Puritan, tradition, it had not. But the Catholic energy had sought to produce a civilisation based upon the historic religion of redemption.

There came a moment when the Catholics of the English Church were persuaded to look to the economics of secularism for their sociological ideals. If, as Mr. Binyon seems to suggest, this was due to the Maurician influence, it was unfortunate, and the mistake has had to be rectified. For the collectivism and communism of secularism, no matter how near their immediate practical proposals may seem to approach the Christian judgment as to what ought to be done, are based upon the "false Rousseauesque appropriation of the natural law unbalanced by the doctrine of sin,"

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and upon a conception of the nature and purpose of society which cannot possibly yield a sociology adequate to the Christian vision.

Mr. Binyon himself recounts the experience of Arnold Toynbee,<sup>56</sup> that apostle of fellowship, who, having for a time satisfied himself with what he called "secular religion," came at length to feel the need for an *eternal* end, which could not be found in the good of the human race. It is this consideration which constitutes the point of departure between a Catholic and a secular sociology.<sup>57</sup> The difference between the ideals of the Oxford Movement and the aims of secular humanism, is not to be explained as due to a false emphasis upon Latin theology which has since had to be compensated and completed by secular, but, so it is assumed, God-inspired, contributions. It is the difference between the acceptance of a temporal human good, and the vision of the supernatural end, as the ground of social action. And that vision of the supernatural end has first to be restored to a broken and blinded humanity by the redemptive revelation and its perpetual witness of Church and Sacrament.

But the object of redemption is the establishment of

<sup>56</sup> Binyon, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>57</sup> For a remarkable confirmation of the effects of humanistic presuppositions in religious thought concerning sociology, see M. B. Reckitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-188.

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the City of God. The Tractarians no doubt were embarrassed by the seductive solicitations of the liberalism of their day. They were frequently driven back to the innermost sanctuary of religion as to the only safe and sure refuge. But that they were oblivious of the prophetic character of the Church, of the socialising and humane consequences of her loyalty to the profoundest mystical realities of her nature, or that they failed to observe between her and the social order growing in their age a deep and desperate opposition, it is impossible to believe. And it is on such general grounds that we may proceed to enlarge upon the distinctive social implications of the revival which they brought to the English Church.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RIVAL HUMANISTS

We have seen that there is considerable evidence to show that the Tractarians were not without perception of the contrast between their own principles and ideals, and the axioms and aims accepted by the society in which they found themselves. No doubt there were from the first numbers of clergy who sympathised with the Church revival, and yet entirely failed to perceive the native and necessary orientation of such a movement with regard to the secular social and economic sanctions then prevailing. Some, while instinctively disliking the emergent capitalist industrialism, clung to the conservative tradition of a variety of social status within a living and sacred corporation of which Church and State were different aspects—the old high Toryism, already actually dead. Others paid no attention to the ordering of secular life, convinced, if they ever considered the question, either that such an issue was dwarfed by what they regarded as purely “spiritual” interests, or that a concern with questions of wages, housing and conditions of labour must inevitably stain

the spiritual purity of the priestly life. And I will not pretend that there has been no perpetuation of these attitudes throughout the history of the Anglo-Catholic Movement. What I wish to deny is that they may be legitimately accepted as expressing or sustaining the genius of the Catholic revival. They are able to maintain themselves only by neglecting the most pertinent consideration of the meaning of the Oxford Movement at the particular moment of English history in which it arose, and of the specific reaction to the secular organisation which marked the original leaders.

The great Tractarians, whether or not they may justly be said to have seen or felt the social implications of their work, adopted a position and laid down certain principles which, in view of subsequent developments, must certainly preclude their successors from ignoring the social issue. For within the Church as interpreted and influenced by the Catholic Movement, the faithful receive a dogma of life which is openly ignored or denied by the world in which they are required to work, play, eat, marry and vote. There is a contradiction presented to the consciousness of Catholic men and women, which cuts down to the foundations of personality; and as the world-order is increasingly formulated in indifference to Christian

doctrine and ethic, that contradiction will place an ever-intensified strain upon the conscience and will of the faithful.

The unbridged chasm between sacred and secular is intolerable, for its existence means that if religion is to be taken as a genuine and necessary concern of man, the world must be regarded either as a sphere of temptation which the soul must flee at all costs, or else as a purely non-moral environment of religious life, in which natural activities run parallel with the spiritual course, but never merge with it or even touch it. It has to be confessed that both conclusions have been accepted at certain times and by certain groups and schools professedly Christian.

It is easy to understand that any religion with a strong ethical sense and a clear sight of the fact of human sin should be liable to conclude that the world is an intrinsically dangerous habitation for the soul, even though such a conclusion may be a misinterpretation of the religion's own presuppositions. Both Catholic asceticism and Protestant puritanism have exhibited traces of such Manichaeism. But if we may believe Troeltsch, Max Weber, Tawney and others, the second of the two forms of dualism proved not a little attractive to later Protestantism, in which there arose

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the conception that there is a non-moral sphere in which the ordinary business of living proceeds, and wherein the behaviour of Christian and non-Christian alike is necessarily swayed by the same indefeasible laws.

The whole development of English political philosophy in the seventeenth, and of economic theory in the eighteenth century, seems to bear testimony to this.<sup>1</sup> The discipline of a supernatural law was abandoned in government, trade and industry. The Christian principle of neighbourly love could not be any longer applied, even in theory, to purely economic operations; and the Christian, observing no more than the secular rules of the market, was quite justified in prospering by using for his own benefit such gifts or advantages as he might possess. Mr. Tawney significantly places before his account of the Puritan movement a text from Tyndale's translation, "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a luckie fellowe."<sup>2</sup>

Now, any such dualism is possible only so long as it can, by various subterfuges, obscure the examination of its philosophical foundations. Concerning the former of the two views mentioned, that, namely, which regards the world only as a snare of the soul, it may be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the author's *The Divine Society*, Chap. IV.

<sup>2</sup> *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Chap. IV.

said at once that it is plainly irreconcilable with the Christian doctrine of creation. If the natural world is essentially an evil to be fled, the less the Christian has to do with it the better. But the soul of man is incarnate in such manner as to be organically related with the world. Not only his physical embodiment, but also his psychological habit is firmly connected with the objective environment. And the world is supplied with significance by the activities of human thought and labour. If therefore he is to flee the world, a man must eventually find himself accepting some doctrine of nihilism. He will agree with what is usually supposed to be the Buddhist attitude toward all phenomenal existence, and this must necessarily include his own personality, so closely linked with phenomena. He will admit the claim of Paul Dahlke that Gotama accomplished the supreme philosophical feat when he "wiped out the world."<sup>8</sup> But he himself must first have wiped out Christian theology from his consideration.

If, however, it be maintained that the conception of an evil world does not of necessity imply departure from faith in God and belief in the soul's personal re-

<sup>8</sup> "For higher thought there is not than the Buddha-thought which wipes out the world, and with it its bearer." Dahlke, *Buddhist Essays*, quoted by R. Mookerji, *Men and Thought in Ancient India* (1924).



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lation with Him, the reply is that we can believe in the existence of a world essentially opposed to the highest human interest only if we are prepared to surrender Christian theism and accept a dualism which is fundamental and eternal. But the co-operation of the two ultimate but opposed forces in the creation of man and the world, inter-related and interdependent as man and the world are, cannot be explained. And, moreover, the whole conception of the world as a field of trial and temptation through which the soul must "run the gauntlet" to gain its true home, means that religion must divorce itself from the cultural development of mankind. It implies that the world's achievements in art and science have been a waste of time, and can never be anything more. And when we consider how such a view must cripple and confine the doctrine of God's providence and limit human joy, we may well be thankful that the entire movement of modern thought, with all its mistakes, has at least made it improbable that Christian theology will ever again be much troubled by this particular heresy.

The characteristic dualism afflicting the Church to-day is other than this, and is found elsewhere than in the Protestant puritanism in which some claim to discover its origin, though in that quarter it still flourishes.

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It is that of a parallelism between a natural and secular order, without moral significance, and the world of religious values, in which the laws of either are confined to their own field and never impinge upon the other. The vast modern assumption that the organisation of human society is an operation governed by non-ethical forces and factors, and may be successfully achieved without any reference to the eternal foundations of life: the construction of political and economic theory totally apart from religious faith or creed, have implied that if religion be indeed concerned with realities, they are not those which we meet in industry, finance and government, and that in these provinces a Christian must submit to the control of the operating natural laws. And it is the lamentable fact that too long the Christian Church has refrained from giving to this view the persistent, complete and direct contradiction which, if the Catholic Faith be the supreme interpretation of reality, it deserves. For this conception can support itself upon no adequate philosophy, and collapses at the first touch of criticism.

Christian theology allows, of course, that God does create the non-moral, but it could scarcely agree that any work of God could be intended to subserve no spiritual purpose whatever. At any rate, not even God

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can create a moral being and at the same time place his conscious volition beneath the indefeasible control of non-moral forces. He cannot create a living soul, half of whose actions may be the worship of God, and the other half, of sheer necessity, the worship of Mammon. To admit that man is an ethical agent is to admit he is wholly an ethical agent whenever he chooses an end and seeks means to realise it. He may, by a concatenation of false choice, have made any further choice a task of heroic proportions, and there is such an aspect in his present economic situation. Nevertheless, it is not usually denied that in the economic sphere men do choose ends and seek means. "Economic law," indeed, so far as it deals with human action, is in large part only the recorded behaviour of masses of men in given circumstances. Scientific economics does not discover the source of that behaviour, and cannot even pretend to do so without exceeding its own province. In so far as the statement of economic law confines itself to what are truly the processes of nature and the certainties of mathematics, it is valid enough. It may also provide trustworthy guidance concerning the probable action of men, so long as a particular assumption of their motive may reasonably be made. But this does not prove that the action is ultimately determined by

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non-ethical forces. It allows the possibility that human action upon a natural environment may undergo great changes, whereof the source is in worlds beyond the power of economics to discuss.

If this be admitted, it follows that the so-called "natural" field of human endeavour may at any moment be invaded by free action choosing ends altogether beyond the earthly horizon, and thus re-moulding the world-order. At all events, however the philosophical verdict may seem to lie, the modern world is convincing proof that neither religion nor the secular process of life is benefited by a divorce which precludes any such supernatural revolution. For while the secular sphere exhibits a confusion in which even the natural powers of men are contradicted and frustrated, religion appears to become unreal, so long as it fails to reveal itself as the source of creative activity within the visible sphere.<sup>4</sup>

Now, the Tractarians in their day were acutely aware of the presence, in the current thought and sentiment, of the desire to secure the resolution of all dualism of natural and supernatural by the thesis that man's whole environment was constituted by a natural

<sup>4</sup> In the foregoing paragraphs I have adapted a paper written for a Committee appointed in preparation for the World Conference on Faith and Order, Lausanne, and printed in *The Modern Churchman*.

order in which resided all the resources of his life. The "liberalism" which they opposed was in essence an attempt so to delimit the human horizon, with the hope of achieving a concentration of human effort and an expansion of human power. In face of this secular humanism, the return of the Oxford leaders to Catholic doctrine and practice necessarily signified a criticism of the secular standpoint, and the provision of a positive alternative. But since the revival which they wrought was Catholic in intention and in fact, it would be folly to interpret its intrinsic meaning as a retreat to any of the dualistic conceptions which we have discussed; for such dualism is alien to the main and central Catholic tradition.

Their reiteration of the Catholic religion in the English Church of that time, addressed as it was to a false humanism, implied in the first place the assertion of the Christian doctrine of man as created in the Divine Image, and as redeemed by Incarnation and Atonement. We must on no account fail to observe that the battle between the Oxford Movement and the contemporary liberalism was primarily concerned with a judgment upon the nature, function and scope of man in the universe. And it is indisputable that the Christian dogma carries certain conceptions of the human

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situation which have a deep-lying but none the less cogent and direct reference for social philosophy, and one which must eventually place the Catholic Faith in the position of the defender of the human race from the dire results of human error.

The Christian doctrine of man as created by God is thus immediately seen to bear a threefold implication. In the first place, man's consciousness, and his assumption of volitional power, are not to be regarded as epiphenomena in a universe the basic nature of which is unconscious necessity or any reality unconcerned with man. They are akin to the nature of the creative Reality. But they are not to be identified or equated with that Reality. Therefore, since man is not self-created, the true end of his being is given for him: he comes into the world "ordered" to a certain end. But since his consciousness and will are akin to the nature of the Reality which is God, that end must transcend any purpose that can properly be named either biological or economic.

Again, man finds himself so "ordered," within a world of objective reference which he learns to regard as material; and he discovers, moreover, that he is related upon one side of his nature to the series of physical and biological events which preceded and accompany

his presence upon the earth. And the conception of a purpose of divine provenance, arising from the doctrine of creation and applied to this situation, bids him regard himself as standing at a point where the two orders, natural and supernatural, intersect. He may not desert the divine ordering of his end to sink back into his natural environment; but neither can he escape his natural environment to achieve the divine end. So long as he remains in this world, he must seek the end by attempting to shape his contact with this world in accordance with that end. And thus, as we shall see at a later stage, to him is given the task of clothing the natural order with its true supernatural significance.

And finally, these implications of the doctrine of creation must be held to cover in their scope the whole field of human life and conduct. There can be, for Christians, no evasion of the consequences by the erection of an unco-ordinated dualism of nature and spirit which leaves the religious pursuit untrammelled by responsibility for the whole cultural process. We are speaking particularly of the doctrine of creation as applied to man; and this, for Christian thought, can never be dissociated from the doctrine of the divine origin of the universe. Obviously, a divine purpose

must be supposed to have governed man's appearance in the universe, so that even were a dualism of nature and spirit to be pressed so far as to involve a denial of God's creatorship of the natural, it would not relieve us from the conclusion that man is intended by God to seek his end in contact with the natural order. But for Christian theology no such question arises, for God is the Creator of the world and of men. And the false gospel of secular humanism could be met only by a doctrine which gave full place to the reality of man's situation in the visible order. If it was to be maintained that he held within this world a divine commission which alone enabled him in mastery and directive power, that commission must be regarded as covering his entire activity. In man, the Supernatural must be held to seek a final sacramental expression in the created universe. Consequently no field of human life can be alien from the religious reference, and man's relation with God cannot be established in its richest integration except in and through the true ordering of his contact with this world.

These considerations are further developed by the doctrine that man is created in the Divine Image, which implies not so much a likeness between God and the solitary soul, as likeness between God and the hu-



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man race. For God is Blessed Trinity, perfect personality in perfect society, and man also is essentially personal and social. If therefore he is to seek the divine end of his creation through "the true ordering of his contact with this world," it follows that this can be done only in so far as his social cohesion is co-ordinated with the sociality of God. The Catholic Faith can never allow that "the flight of the alone to the alone" is an adequate description of the ultimate spiritual experience. The triunity of God admits no possibility of divine fellowship with the soul which has not discovered its social relations within its own sphere. The denial of relations within the Being of God raises stupendous difficulties for any doctrine of creation, for it forbids any ground of relation between God and the universe; and the logical result of abandoning the Trinitarian doctrine is either pantheism or Manichaeism. But the acceptance of Trinitarian doctrine and religious individualism at the same time is the acceptance of a signal contradiction. If God's eternal Being is social, man's communion with God must be achieved in and through social modes. This, as we shall presently observe, is not to depress the meaning or the value of personality. It merely lays down the true method of the realisation of personality; and it af-

fords a fundamental theological ground for the rejection of all that religiosity, wherever it may be found, which is prone to regard the salvation of the individual as a process entirely apart from the salvation of society.

The Christian doctrine of man, however, cannot be fully understood apart from the doctrine of his redemption through the Incarnation and Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. For, in the first place, only the gospel of redemption can protect man from a destructive cynicism regarding his own human personality and the race as a whole. The enormous personal and social failures, the consciousness of perpetual conflict and dissociation within the soul and society, must eventually provoke despair of mankind and scepticism regarding its destiny. Mere external achievement can do nothing to relieve the interior human situation, as witness the plight of the modern world amidst the huge and unprecedented instrumentation which it has achieved. But the doctrine of redemption asserts two things: that man has somehow missed the mark and fallen into bondage to false ends; but that nevertheless his transcendent worth and significance are not finally obliterated. And it is only that paradox of divine idealism regarding man's potentiality, and rigid realism

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concerning his actuality, that can ever meet the human fact. This is what the doctrine and experience of redemption accomplish.

We have first to observe that the dogma of Incarnation involves a certain valuation of human personality by its very assertion that the Person of Christ was not human, but divine. The Christological problem faced by the Church in its conciliar discussions has a distinct bearing upon the question of what the Faith allows us to infer as to the divine estimate of man; and the final formulation of Greek theology by John of Damascus is of great interest in this respect. For that theologian incorporated in his Christology the doctrine of *enhypostasia* which he had received from Leontius of Byzantium.<sup>5</sup> The central problem had always been, to explain the relation between the Divine Person and the human nature in Christ in such a way as to discover either in its reality and fulness and to do violence to neither. The doctrine of the *enhypostasis* of the Lord's human nature finds the reality and fulness of his humanity precisely in its association with His Deity: which obviously means that divine personality "already contains within itself all that goes to make up human personality,"<sup>6</sup> so that the act of Incarnation was no

<sup>5</sup> John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Bk. III, Chaps. III, IX, XI.

<sup>6</sup> H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*, p. 91. See Part I, Chaps. 8 and 9; Parts II and III.

cosmic freak, because its possibility was given in the nature of personality, human and divine. I think we must allow that there was one valuable contribution in the teaching of Apollinaris, the conception, namely, that there was already a human element in God, which alone made Incarnation possible. At all events, this thesis finds a place in the ultimate presentation of Greek Christology; and it follows that human personality, created, dependent, limited as it is, must be regarded as of divine kinship.<sup>7</sup>

Side by side with these reflections, we may place the contention of Dr. Temple, that "the apprehension of personality is a part of the Christian enrichment of thought and life." He denies that personality was first discovered in man and afterwards ascribed to God, and declares that the idea was first reached in the doctrine of God as formed in the light of Christ's revelation, "and then transferred to man," whose personality was "felt to be guaranteed by his personal intercourse with the personal God."<sup>8</sup>

The conclusion is that the Incarnation at once requires, discovers and announces the divine valuation

<sup>7</sup> Cf. G. P. Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 159, 160, and Harnack, *History of Dogma*, Vol. IV, p. 233, note 3.

<sup>8</sup> W. Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics*, p. 79.

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of the human person. But the full scope of this truth may perhaps best be seen in relation with another clear implication of the Incarnation, the doctrine of the spiritual solidarity of the race. The Incarnation was accomplished at a specific point in space and time; but it affected the whole human race in all times and places. We must conclude, then, that the divine valuation of personality is bestowed upon men who are in inescapable relations with all other men; and this means that while the Catholic Faith can make no terms with individualism, it nevertheless requires that a true social order shall rightly evaluate the individual and necessitate his genuine, creative self-expression.

I may say at this point that I believe democracy to be the only valid ideal of human government. I believe it carries the sanction of the Christian dogmatic. But democracy is not to be found in every place where its name is glorified; for plutocratic individualism and Bolshevist collectivism and Fascist Cæsarism, all praised by some of their apologists as either openly or tacitly "democratic," alike fail in the appreciation of personality as such. And here we may discover why the theological instinct of the Tractarians prompted a suspicion of the "democracy" so loudly advertised in the nineteenth century. The point could scarcely be more

clearly elucidated than by Mr. Reckitt, whose words I will quote at some length.

"True democracy, then," he says, "is based on the acknowledgment of personality in political life. It is upon this that its claim to be the political constitution closest to the spirit of Christianity must depend. But the democracy of the modern world emerged at a time when the idea of personality had been divorced from its essential connection with social solidarity and responsibility, human and spiritual, to be enslaved to a ruthless individualism. Democracy arose concomitantly with a rapid accentuation of competition, and the 'enfranchisement' of the nineteenth century arrived at a moment when the depersonalisation of the average individual had been completed by the wage-system, the factory, and the grimly stereotyped industrial town. Democratic forms might multiply in politics, but in the personal life of man, responsibility belonged increasingly to the boss, the foreman and the landlord, urban or rural; and 'freedom' had to get on as well as it could without it. As a result, democracy, so far as it had any reality, fell into two opposite evils; it became on the one hand atomised, divisive, self-centred, divorced from any consciousness of the general good; and on the other hand, standardised and 'mass-produced,'

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hypnotised by an unscrupulous and irresponsible press, the victim of slogans, catchwords and manufactured opinion.”<sup>9</sup>

The so-called democracy of the modern western world may well be the native product of a humanism based upon secular foundations: it has no relation with the Catholic dogma of man. And they are misguided who, led by their Christian principles to condemn the inhuman confusion which this spurious democracy has produced, proceed to look for redress in the direction of a Cæsarism either of personal autocracy or collectivist discipline, devised to crush out the creative will from the individual. For the only social order which the Faith can finally bless must have regard to the mystical value and supernatural potentiality of every person.

From this perhaps not entirely irrelevant digression, to the subject of which we must necessarily return at a later stage, we may proceed to complete our study of the Catholic dogma of redemption in its social significance. We have seen that it is only a religion of redemption that can be at once realistic and reassuring; and it is in the issue of a divine Incarnation in the Cross of Atonement that realism and reassurance most

<sup>9</sup> Maurice B. Reckitt, *Faith and Society*, p. 253.

convincingly meet. For there is displayed the essential nature of human sin. When God came amongst men, this is what happened to Him. We are such a race that God cannot be seen amongst us, but in self-defence we spit upon Him and crown Him with thorns of mockery. Yet He has come and has suffered for the joy that was set before Him; and this is the supreme evidence of the divine valuation of mankind, the final ground of Christian hope. We know well what man has done with himself and his fellows, since we can behold what he has done to his Saviour. But not all the towering sins of the world, not the stupidity and cruelty of the past or the pride and vulgarity of the present can destroy in us the belief that the human race is intended to become the sphere of the Kingdom of God. "A thing of price is man, because for him Christ died."

But there is even more than this. We see at the Cross, wrought out upon the field of positive history and within the very process of human action, the reversal of that pressure of motive and judgment by which man was enslaved. Here is the Christian sanction for challenging the assumption that established social tendencies must necessarily work themselves out to their assured ends of decadence. Here is the constant basis of our faith that man is not properly the sport of



circumstance, even of the concatenated circumstance forged by his own misdirected choice. He need not even see his civilisation slide slowly into the ruin prepared by its own inner falsity. He may purge, redeem, reshape, sublimate it, for nobler ends, since within his history there has been the great Intervention, certainly on his behalf, but addressed also as a formative principle and inspiration to his creative will. The Cross of Christ lays the foundation of the Kingdom of God amongst men, but our Lord calls men to take up the cross of reversal and revaluation: the cross of revolution. And unless we are prepared to believe that such triumphant uprising against the impersonal tides and tendencies of this world is an open possibility, we must regard the Cross of Christ as an irrelevant and ineffective episode.

Such then, in briefest outline, are the bases of the Catholic dogma of man considered as part of the groundwork of Christian sociology. It must be remembered, too, that in the shining register of her Saints, the Church produces evidence of manhood transformed by that divine grace of which the dogma of redemption is the protective expression. And I am suggesting that while their emphasis upon Catholic doctrine was quite naturally accompanied in the Tractarians by a repug-

nance toward the humanism then finding popular currency, it did not leave them blind to the glaring contrasts between the Catholic ideal for man, and his actual social achievement. We have seen indeed that in some of their utterances the Catholic revival was held to involve a definite and characteristic approach to social and economic problems. And we have argued that at all events the principles laid down by the Tractarian leaders in face of the contemporary situation place upon their successors an inescapable responsibility in view of the subsequent development of that situation.

But it may be suggested that so far as the doctrine of man is concerned, much of its main theological structure was accepted by the Evangelicals, and that therefore it is saying too much to argue that its social implications constitute a peculiar onus upon Catholics. There is, however, one fact of signal significance to be remembered. The Oxford Movement centred upon the doctrine of the Church. Its testimony was to the truths that in the Catholic Faith not merely men, but Man, was to be regarded as the object of redemption: that indeed a man cannot be saved except in and through the redemption of the social relation; that the Church, therefore, must be a permanent element in the Gospel. But the doctrine of the Church cannot be separated

from its issues in the entire field of human sodality. If it be true that the Incarnation effected, and was intended to effect, the foundation of a new human relationship within a visible society, and to this there is abundant witness in the New Testament, then we are faced with a clear alternative. Either that specific order of fellowship which is secured within the Church must be regarded as properly normative and controlling for the whole social process, or we have to fall back upon some such hopeless dualism as we have already discussed and dismissed. But surely if the Church is composed of men and women who have actually been constituted the Body of Christ, they are that same Body at every moment of their lives, and all their doings must be governed by the laws of their Christian association. And since to the Church is given the task of attempting to draw the whole world into her fellowship, it follows that her doctrine of man in necessary and redeemed society must be applicable to the structure of the entire world-order.

Such was the destiny accepted by the Church amidst the tumbling ruin of the Roman Empire, and thus there appeared the mediæval system which, with all its faults and shortcomings, was a genuine if incomplete attempt to found society upon the Christian dogma of

man as redeemed and rehabilitated within the Church. It was from this root that there arose the regulations for the establishment of the just price and the laws in restraint of usury. The accepted thesis was that the end of human life was spiritual; but that spiritual end was not conceived as unrelated to secular affairs. It was an end which reduced all the operations and appurtenances of terrestrial life to their true level as significant means. An attempt was made, at least in theory and in some measure in practice, to seek first the Kingdom of God; and the civic and economic pursuits of men were to be shaped as instrumental in that spiritual activity.

This was the enunciation of a truly humanistic principle, for the Kingdom of God finds its sphere within the personality and society of man; and only by thus regarding the orientation of his nature toward the beatific vision can man secure himself in mastery over the things and systems of this world. We shall be making a mistake if we suppose that the mediæval mind was unconscious of the actual direction of its aim, amidst the pressure of false alternatives upon its choice. "The mediæval doctors," says Mr. Reckitt, "while exalting productive labour, did not magnify it solely as an end in itself. 'Production,' said S. Antonino of Florence, 'is

on account of man, not man of production'—a dictum which might appear to verge upon platitude did we not reflect on how sharply it runs counter to the assumptions of modern economic practice and the consequences of modern economic theory. Mediæval work had about it an inseparable element of toil, but it was in some measure—often in large measure—a craft also, and satisfaction was the natural fruit of it. Moreover, while avarice and cupidity, according to S. Antonino, foil the very purpose of work, possessions honestly acquired dispose the soul to contentment, and 'goods' may be truly so described, since they were ordained by God for man's use. 'The object of gain is that by its means man may provide for himself and others according to their state. The object of providing for himself and others is that they may live virtuously. The object of virtuous life is the attainment of everlasting glory.'"<sup>10</sup>

No Catholic Revival could be worthy of the name which failed to attempt in the modern world the restoration of such control, by the Catholic dogma of man, over the sociological field. And at least the adumbration of such a conviction appeared in the Tractarians as they faced the world of their generation. We have

<sup>10</sup> Reckitt, *op. cit.*, p. 316, quoting also S. Antonino and *Mediæval Economics*, by Bede Jarrett, O.P.

now to exhibit, in contrast with such Catholic humanism, the aims and progress of that liberalism or secular humanism which they so pertinaciously opposed.

The Renaissance has perhaps been more variously estimated than any other great human movement. That it contained the potentiality of a genuine enlargement of human experience together with a true enrichment of the human spirit, there need be no manner of doubt; but that its main effect, if the modern world is to be taken as evidence, was in some measure disastrous, is a contention not without considerable support. Professor Eucken regarded it as a sane and necessary slackening of the strain imposed upon human nature by the ages of faith. "It would be impossible to live continuously in this state of tension." Thus man abandons religion as "the central authority in life," and religion becomes "more and more the mere embroidery of a life abandoned to other interests." "This change," Eucken continues, "dates mainly from the beginning of the modern period—a period in which the natural world, so long despised and disregarded, wins a new power of attraction, speaks to man in a new language, and bids him draw fresh courage from fresh founts of inspiration. Man acquires the proud consciousness of his own powers: the problems of the

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world's work crowd upon him, dazzle him, push far into the background all thought for the salvation of the soul. He can scarcely understand a frame of mind which could centre its thought and care on the spiritual life."<sup>11</sup>

The work from which these words are quoted was first published in 1908, before the full harvest of such anthropocentric humanism had become visible, though Eucken was by no means unaware of the problems which it was creating for the world. A more recent writer, looking back upon precisely the same historical phenomena, forms a different judgment of their true nature. "The Renaissance," says Mr. Christopher Dawson, "has its beginning in the self-discovery, the self-realisation and the self-exaltation of Man. Mediæval man had attempted to base his life on the supernatural. His ideal of knowledge was not the adventurous quest of the human mind exploring its own kingdom; it was an intuition of the eternal verities which is itself an emanation from the Divine Intellect—*irradiatio et participatio primæ lucis*. The men of the Renaissance, on the other hand, turned away from the eternal and the absolute to the world of nature and human experience. They rejected their dependence on the supernatural

<sup>11</sup> Rudolf Eucken, *The Meaning and Value of Life*, pp. 9, 10.

and vindicated their independence and supremacy in the temporal order. But thereby they were gradually led by an internal process of logic to criticise the principles of their own knowledge and to lose confidence in their own freedom. The self-affirmation of man gradually led to the denial of the spiritual foundations of his freedom and knowledge. This tendency shows itself in every department of modern thought.”<sup>12</sup>

That, I believe, is a very important judgment. But the valid grounds for it had not yet been fully disclosed at the time of the Oxford Movement. The rejection of the supernatural was at first rather a possibility than an assured characteristic of the Renaissance—a situation illustrated, for example, in Descartes, for those who study him with discernment. The following three centuries, however, saw the removal of successive spheres of human interest from the Christian influence and in each of them the acceptance of canons and criteria opposed to Christian standards. The period of the Oxford Movement was critical, because it was then that, owing to the expansion of material resources in the industrial revolution, the promise of the Kingdom of Man in an earthly paradise began to appear capable of tangible realisation.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher Dawson, *Christianity and the New Age*, pp. 15, 16.



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Throughout the following generations that secular confidence grew and flourished mightily in western Europe and in the United States of America. The unprecedented accumulation of financial capital, employing the machine factories for the exploitation of an expanding world-market, enabling not only an almost ceaseless expansion of the capitalist industrial system, but an ever-increasing attainment of material possession and power, seemed to provide overwhelming proof that at long last the feet of men had found the right road, and that man's true business was with this world alone. No Spengler had yet arisen to point out that money was a "thought-form," having its own inde-feasible limitations and an assuredly insoluble problem as its conclusion.<sup>13</sup> "There has never," says Péguy, "been an age in which money was to such a degree the only master and god."<sup>14</sup> For money was the symbol of man's power over his environment.

As the years passed by, physical science seemed to bring additional testimony to the thesis of the wholly mundane scope of man's existence. The assertion of his

<sup>13</sup> "The dictature of money marches on, tending to its material peak. . . . If it were anything tangible, then its existence would be for ever—but, as it is a form of thought, it fades out as soon as it has thought its economic world to finality and has no more material upon which to feed."—Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Vol. II, p. 506.

<sup>14</sup> C. Péguy, *L'argent Suite*, pp. 170, 171.

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biological continuity with the lower animals, the account given of the vastness of the stellar universe and of the immensity of geological epochs seemed indeed to many minds to forbid any lofty estimate of man's place and destiny. But on the other hand the fresh victories won by science itself, the consequent multiplication of human power, and a merely sentimental assumption that man was the final product of the evolutionary process, gave to the term "science" a curious connotation of optimism even when, for sober thought, it would have appeared to be destroying the central significance of human existence. And just as physical science was retracting its dogmatic materialism and physicists were moving unexpectedly toward an idealist interpretation, psychology claimed to have established finally the exclusively biological function of mind, and thus once again to have vindicated the secular assertion.

In philosophy, the influence of Hegel lingered, but that of Comte eventually dominated, at least for a definite period. Pragmatism arrived to inform the world that the Absolute was non-existent, and that it was actually the fact that man was the creator and measure of truth: until Pragmatism itself faded out of fashion before the message of "emergent evolution," that inverted idealism announced by philosophers solemnly standing

upon their heads to prove that man is the creative fount of values and in due time may succeed in creating God.

But in one sphere the Hegelian thought endured. In the field of political theory, its doctrine of the State as omniscient and absolute, the ultimate ground of ethical life and the supreme mould of humanity, became more securely established than ever. The State became the accepted "universal" which humanism was quite unable to transcend, except in a cosmopolitanism which emasculated men of positive attributes. No transcendental ethic could be discovered upon the secular hypothesis, or accepted by the modern State which claimed a final jurisdiction. Hence the glorification of the State in a sovereignty which tended at once to repress the best powers of personality and to destroy the notion of a common humanity.<sup>15</sup> Yet since industrial and financial development became ever more closely centred upon the State organisation, the State was hailed as a mode of man's greatness, and that particular form of national pride and economic avidity known as imperialism became the supreme form of social enter-

<sup>15</sup> "In our days the State has come to be a formidable machine which works in marvellous fashion: of wonderful efficiency by reason of the quantity and precision of its means. Once it is set up in the midst of society, it is enough to touch a button for its enormous levers to start working and exercise their overwhelming power on any portion whatever of the social framework."—José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*, pp. 131, 132.

The whole of Chap. XIII is important.

prise. And the true nature of the whole process was concealed by the enlargement of a powerless franchise and the growth of a counterfeit democracy which were employed to provide with human likeness the Great Leviathan which was in fact a gigantic and destructive robot.<sup>16</sup>

In the period of the secular success, however, the western world was fascinated by the "progress" which was being made and which was rapidly becoming the ultimate criterion of all action. It was taken for granted that man had entered upon the culmination of his history. It was assumed that the modern world was witnessing a vast release of essential human power, and that this must henceforth continue until the earth had been transformed into a kind of secular paradise. The long and painful preparation, that martyrdom of man which a nineteenth-century writer had so poignantly described,<sup>17</sup> was of the past; nor was there any further need for the consolations which had made tolerable that enormous labour.

<sup>16</sup> Maritain supposes that humanism tends to produce the false universalism of a world-state arising from the effacement of national barriers. It is the thesis of Ortega y Gasset that modern secularism fails precisely in the achievement of any such universal order. It seems impossible to suppose that an ideology of greed and fear can issue in the federation of the world. But Maritain sees that if such a world-republic could come into being it might be "utopian and humanitarian to begin with," but the "pursuit of the unity of man regardless of Christ" must end by being the "pretext for the imposition on man of an absolute violence and anti-human tyranny."

<sup>17</sup> Winwood Reade, *The Martyrdom of Man*.

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It was now that "Liberal" Christianity appeared, the legitimate offspring of its period, to justify the forebodings of Pusey and to explain that Jesus was not the Incarnate Word, but the efflorescence of humanity; and for masses of men of all classes religion ceased even to be "the embroidery of a life abandoned to other interests." A little later, life was "embroidered" only by mechanised and mass-produced amusements and by the entertainment provided by "the new morality." So did the secular endeavour industriously proceed, building a world-order above a frightful abyss, a vacancy of all solid thought or strong faith. Threatening minor collapses of the edifice were either repaired or ignored: the warnings of wiser souls were unheeded. The builders were able to point to an enormous material achievement and the majority of men were in no mood to ask for any other proof.

Yet as time advanced, embarrassments accumulated. Physical science seemed to be deserting the secularist cause, for an idealist physics which discovered an objective mathematical structure as the reality of the material universe, could no longer be employed to prove that either truth, beauty or goodness was of entirely subjective provenance in man. And the new psychology, which promised to fill the office of the

defunct materialist physical science, was speedily found not to be invulnerable. Maritain has pointed out that "any erosion or excavation or elimination of rational life in an attempt to discover a solid rock-bottom" of human instinct constituting a "definite structure of behaviour," is bound to fail. "Nature acquires a countenance in our case only when it is perfected by mind, man acquires his truth only when he is fashioned from within by reason and virtue."<sup>18</sup> And this means that human life is such that it cannot be formed but by attention to ideal ends and values. But the new psychology was always in the unfortunate position of attempting to reason mankind out of reason. It could not assert, for instance, that theology was the rationalisation of desire, without inviting the retort that the new psychology was at least more obviously the rationalisation of desire.

Meanwhile the philosophy of emergent evolution was finding difficulties in suggesting a basis for ethics beyond that of an obsolete naturalism: to explain how men were to pursue metabiological ends where no metabiological sphere existed until shaped by human activity. And finally, the alleged facts of the Christian revelation, announced as disclosing the true ideal end

<sup>18</sup> Maritain, *Religion and Culture*, Chap. I.

of human existence, were discovered to be not so easily disposed of as the enthusiastic secularists had supposed. A more competent New Testament criticism and a more thoroughgoing examination of Christian origins arrested the flowing tide of liberalism in theology, and Catholicism regained confidence and gathered new influence in the world of thought. Secularism as a philosophy had fallen very much under the weather.

But what for the secularist mind and sentiment must be the most pertinent challenge began to appear in the realm of positive accomplishment. The nature of this challenge we shall analyse in our next lecture, and at this point we must rest content with a brief reference to it. In the two fields of economic organisation and international politics, it appears that the modern world has been betrayed by the very assumptions which were the mainstays of its self-confidence. Those assumptions have reduced it to the absurd and humiliating condition of sheer inability to provide adequate maintenance for the human race, at a time when the development of technique has caused the earth to teem with abundance. And on the other hand they have left it powerless to escape the incubus and peril of armed states, each fearing further conflict, but all alike thrust into menacing economic competition

as the only means of existence upon the present terms.

Now, there are some contemporary humanists, Mr. Irving Babbitt for example, who are anxious enough to place an idealistic interpretation upon human life, refusing to be bludgeoned by scientific assertions about human origins into the acceptance of merely biological criteria of personal and social values, and claiming that these must be decided rather by our judgment of the human end or goal.<sup>19</sup> These thinkers, however, have no use for dogma, and upon that score part company from the Catholic Faith. But I should have supposed that if we are to speak of ends and goals, dogma is precisely the thing that most matters. If a person is dogmatic about his destination, he has some criterion of judgment about the route. But it is useless for him to discuss the route if he has no clear notion as to the place he wishes to reach. The Catholic religion supposes that it is beyond the power of any humanist as such to discover the destiny of mankind, and declares that this has been revealed by God. At all events, it begins to appear that the modern failure has been due to the acceptance of a false dogma of end and goal—and that is being demonstrated even upon the pragmatic test.

<sup>19</sup> Irving Babbitt, *On Being Creative*.



But obviously, the very "progressivism" of the secularist age contains within itself the menace of decline. For in so far as it is merely progressivist, it falls beneath the cogent criticism of Ortega y Gasset. "Under the mask of generous futurism, the progressive no longer concerns himself with the future; convinced that it holds in store for him neither surprises nor secrets, nothing adventurous, nothing essentially new, assured that the world will now proceed on a straight course, neither turning aside nor dropping back, he puts away from him all anxiety about the future and takes his stand in the definite present. Can we be surprised that the world to-day seems empty of purpose, anticipations, ideals?"<sup>20</sup> But in so far as the progressivism was secular, it was ultimately progressive only toward such an end of the human adventure as could be predicted by the positive sciences. That end seemed in all probability to be the death of the individual, and the disappearance of the race when the earth should become no longer habitable.

Man, however, cannot confront such an end and remain himself. He is bound to suffer disillusion and depression; and scepticism as to the value of all human effort or attainment will spread like a miasma about

<sup>20</sup> Ortega y Gasset, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

his steps, when he is compelled to accept the thesis that all effort and attainment come to a like end with all self-indulgence and sloth. When there is no faith in an eternal end which may be realised, provisional and tentative goals must cease to have meaning or importance except for the naïve and unawakened. Man may then have possessed himself of power to do mighty works, but he does them not. "We live at a time," says Ortega y Gasset, "when man believes himself fabulously capable of creation, but he does not know what to create. Lord of all things, he is not Lord of himself. With more means at its disposal, more knowledge, more technique than ever, it turns out that the world to-day goes the same way as the worst worlds that have been; it simply drifts."<sup>21</sup>

The astonishing but indubitable effect of the directivity exercised by the liberalism and humanism we have described, is that man has become dwarfed and depressed by his own titanic engagements. Humanism at length discloses its fundamental inhumanism. And if we are right in asserting that the only true sanction for belief in the dignity and transcendent destiny of mankind is the Catholic dogma of man, then it is fruitless to look for any relief from the present situation

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 47.

until the secularist preoccupation shall have yielded to the restored doctrine of the human end which the Catholic dogma involves.

Preoccupation with the external world, and indeed with only certain aspects of that world, has impoverished the human spirit at the moment when man's very success in the exploitation of nature's resources has raised problems which require for their solution the enrichment of his spirit in faith and love, and in the mystical sense of life's wonder. The Catholic ideal of "contemplation" as the primary human employment, was no praise of stagnation, for contemplation was regarded as "superabounding" in action. But Maritain declares that the modern world has "completely reversed the essential order of life. External activity began three centuries ago and more to absorb the whole life of man, because in reality the world then turned to the conquest and practical utilisation of matter away from union with God through faith and love. Conversion to perishable goods, the definition of mortal sin, gradually became the general attitude of civilisation."<sup>22</sup> Our contention is that this process actually insulated man from those spiritual resources which were to prove necessary for the right ordering of the enor-

<sup>22</sup> Maritain, *The Things That Are Not Caesar's*, p. 114.

mous accretions of power and knowledge which his scientific discoveries were to place in his hands. Lacking such resources, behold his situation!

He has become the attendant of a financial, economic and mechanical technique in the evolution of capitalist industry, a technique which now seems to run of itself to ends beyond his choice or comprehension. The most impudent extravaganza of Samuel Butler<sup>23</sup> did not exceed in sheer ludicrousness the actual situation in which the industrial and financial leaders of the world confess that they are being led by a system whereof the latest ramifications they have entirely ceased to understand. "Man," says Maurice Reckitt, "inflated by his triumphs over nature, overlooked the extent to which his boasted technique was triumphing over him."<sup>24</sup> And he quotes a pertinent passage from Philippe Mairet: "It is often said that the mechanical age has plunged us into materialism, but it would be truer to say that it has misled us into an inhuman idealism. It has driven us mad for efficiency, efficiency signifying powerful means. While our organisation and implements have attained to magnificent power and complexity, their final productions are more and more unreal. There is no heart and vitality in them; it has all

<sup>23</sup> Samuel Butler, *Erewhon*, Chap. XXIII.

<sup>24</sup> Reckitt, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

gone into the means taken to produce them . . . compared with the work of a real culture they look dead. They *are* dead.”<sup>25</sup> We shall see the reason for this phenomenon in industry more clearly when we reach the closer analysis of the effects of secularism in its own chosen sphere of material efficiency. The point at the moment is that its gigantic means exhaust the energies of men to sustain, without returning to men a comparable measure of life-sustenance. Man, therefore, may fitly be described as enslaved to his own mechanism.

That mechanism is not even intended to secure *wealth*, in the sense of proportioned well-being for men. It is expected to produce money. And there is justice in Maritain's assertion that “instead of being considered as a mere feeder enabling a living organism, which the productive undertaking is, to procure the necessary material, equipment and replenishing, money has come to be considered the living organism, and the undertaking with its human activities as the feeder and instrument of money.”<sup>26</sup> But if any one supposes that in some representative human brains there is actually a controlling grasp of what man is really doing by so patiently attending upon the means whereby money is

<sup>25</sup> P. Mairé, *The Idea Behind Craftsmanship*.

<sup>26</sup> Maritain, *Religion and Culture*, p. 62.

produced, let him hear one of the most distinguished British authorities upon the subject.

Mr. Montagu Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, speaking at a banquet given by the Lord Mayor to the city bankers at the Mansion House last night, confessed that the world economic problem was too great for him. One of the great questions they wished to dispose of, he said, was that of the frozen credits throughout Europe, but he did not know how it was to be achieved. "But generally speaking," he said, "the difficulties through which we have been passing are too great. I wonder if any one in the world can really direct the affairs of the world or of this country with any assurance as to what result his action will have. In spite of every attempt that has been made the vast forces of the world, the herd instinct, the desperation of the people who have neither work nor market, have brought about a series of events and a general tendency which appear to me at the present time to be outside the control of any man or of any Government. . . . The difficulties are so vast, the forces so unlimited, so novel, precedents are so lacking, that I approach the whole subject, not only in ignorance, but in humility. It is too great for me. I am willing to do my best."<sup>27</sup>

It would not be difficult to criticise this utterance if it were worth while. What we must notice, however, is that here we find a pointed example of what Maurice Reckitt calls "the widely accepted supremacy of event

<sup>27</sup> *The Daily Herald* (London), Oct. 21, 1932.

over will, of 'tendency' over responsibility." And so true is his further statement that "modern thought increasingly inclines to revolve round the problem of fitting men to economic assumptions rather than to apply itself to any effort to relate these to the needs and true destiny of man,"<sup>28</sup> that recent statesmanship in most Western countries has assumed an appearance of more than Gilbertian absurdity in its attempt to slaughter human nature in sacrifice to "world situations." Never was the earth a more comfortless bed of Procrustes for man, than in this culmination of the great age of humanism.

Precisely the same willingness to regard man as the mere shadow of inhuman circumstance is seen in the growth and propaganda of the so-called "new morality." Because in the artificial and dehumanising conditions of great modern cities the standards of sexual morality are easily obliterated; because under present economic pressure the family is in some respects menaced, therefore we are to allow the institution of the family and its ancient sanctities to be abolished, sexual impulse ceasing in most people to sustain any relation to social ends and becoming a wild, meaningless, volcanic force, having as its purpose really nothing but

<sup>28</sup> Reckitt, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

carnal satisfaction. It is safe to say that such an isolation of sex from the constructive spiritual process would eventually leave disgust and sickness more pronounced than any satisfaction.<sup>29</sup> But what I wish to point out is the slipshod and unmanly acceptance of the moulding of human nature itself by the crass, lunatic forces which only human unwisdom has released: the ignoble assent to the proposition that man must now sacrifice the significance of one side of his nature because "circumstances" have made its normal expression somewhat more difficult. There is no proposal to smash the circumstances. To them some subtle sanctity appears to be attached. It is men and women who have to be spokeshaved to fit them, and children who have to be "controlled" from entering the gates of life.<sup>30</sup>

The great age of humanism sees an embarrassing multiplication of material resources, in company with so great an impoverishment of spirit, that the resources themselves become a problem threatening the stability of civilisation itself. The growth and outcome of this process we shall attempt to trace in our next chapter, when we come to discuss the inevitable collapse of secular humanism and of the whole fantastic structure

<sup>29</sup> Cf. A. G. Tansley, *The New Psychology*, p. 222, *et seq.*

<sup>30</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Marriage and Morals*; and an able reply, *The New Morality*, by G. E. Newsom, Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge.



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which it has reared. Meanwhile we observe that our inability to put our means to any sure and dignified end receives from time to time illustrations which suggest that human life has some prospect of becoming a colossal burlesque. Man has harnessed the fierce and glorious lightning, and lo! its fires speak in the world's capitals the virtues of some soap, or tobacco, or bottled beer. Not that I regard these things as unworthy of a place in life. I merely regard them, considered as means to the end of money, as unworthy of so prominent a place upon the sky-line of our architecture. Or again:

Excited delegates punched one another and coats and collars were torn during the international wireless conference at Madrid. Chairs crashed on the floor and papers flew into the air. Attendants were at first too aghast at such a happening to interfere. Then they tried to separate the mass of struggling delegates. They were too few, too feeble—and had to fetch reinforcements from outside the conference hall before they could separate the radio experts of the nations. An end had to be called to the meeting.<sup>81</sup>

And this is what happens when men come together to discuss the gift which might one night announce glad tidings of great joy to all the sons of men, if the modern world had any such tidings to announce. Dis-

<sup>81</sup> *The Daily Herald* (London), Oct. 22, 1932.

illusion, however, is abroad in the world at a moment when, if there were sufficient vision and will, a better day than any that is past might be dawning. But the modern world has turned its face from heaven.

The most acute observers are conscious of a curious contradiction between the expanding material potentiality and the shrinking spiritual capacity of these times. From all countries and from various points of view accusations of failure are being levelled against the modern world. Spengler, indeed, sees no possibility before any culture, other than rise and decline, but he makes no doubt that Western civilisation is approaching its end. This, for him, is "the moment when money is celebrating its last victories, and the Cæsarism that is to succeed approaches with quiet, firm step." Thus secular humanism has proved to be not the rebirth of humanity, but merely the penultimate stage of one amongst many limited cultures.<sup>32</sup>

Ortega y Gasset refuses all such fatalism, but he perceives that a secular and mechanical civilisation has produced a vast vulgarisation of man, and such lesion of the sense of interior responsibility as may easily bring about a swift decadence of the technical achievement upon which our modern culture has so complacently

<sup>32</sup> O. Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Vol. II, pp. 506, 507.

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rested. He regards the present phase in the West as characterised by the emergence of the "mass man," who "has no interest in basic cultural values, and no solidarity with them," is accustomed to enjoy the fruits of a stupendous scientific effort, but lacks the moral vitality which is the real root of such effort. He believes in the possibility of spiritual renovation, but apparently sees no possibility of its arising from the typical assumptions and outlook of our time. And he sees always the possibility that civilisation may return to the jungle.<sup>33</sup>

Christopher Dawson makes a somewhat similar comment. "Never," he quotes Péguy, "has the temporal been so protected against the spiritual; and never has the spiritual been so unprotected against the temporal."<sup>34</sup> He points out that in an age which had cut itself free, not only from tradition, but also from art and thought, the intellectuals found themselves deprived of "the spiritual leadership that was possessed by Voltaire and Rousseau, by Goethe and Fichte." They were "expected to follow society, not to lead it," and the best of them, refusing such servility, now turned to art and literature as "an escape from reality" and so intensified the divorce of the secular from the idealist standards. Only the current belief in "progress," he

<sup>33</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 55, 63, 67, 97, *et passim*.

<sup>34</sup> C. Péguy, *L'argent Suite*, pp. 70, 71.

holds, has obscured the "essentially transitory character of humanist culture";<sup>35</sup> and the more recent world-bewilderment must surely have checked that belief and exposed the nature of that culture.

A like accusation is brought by Peter Wust against positivism. He sees the effects of secular humanism displayed in the modern irreverence and indifferentism, not only as toward God and the supernatural, but as toward man himself in his loftier potentiality. "There scarcely remains," says he, "a trace in modern man of that reverence for the higher zone of the human spirit which was felt by the man of antiquity, not to mention mediæval man's reverence for the supernatural. Today the frigid, value-indifferent philistine holds almost undisputed sway."<sup>36</sup>

It is patent, therefore, that in the judgment of many thinkers, the humanism which set out to dispense with supernatural faith and obedience, to ignore the divine sanctions of hope offered by the Catholic Faith, has issued in a grave interior collapse of the spirit.<sup>37</sup> It will be our next task to relate this process to that exterior *impasse*, confusion and decline which have appeared as the convincing close of the epoch. But we shall ap-

<sup>35</sup> Dawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Wust, *Crisis in the West*, p. 36.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Karl Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism* (Eng. tr.), pp. 7-9.

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proach this subject remembering that there is a yet unexhausted alternative to the humanism which is now bankrupt. If that were not so, we should find ourselves perhaps forced to the grim conclusion of Spengler, seeing in the present decline the inevitable passing of yet another human culture in the inscrutable procession of history.

But the Catholic Revival has not succumbed to the decay which has fallen upon the "liberalism" which its leaders attacked. The Faith will not fall into the grave prepared for any human order. It is great enough to reveal the long succession of cultural forms, rising and falling, not as a monstrous phenomenon beyond the power of human conception to expound, but as due to inadequate attempts at the true formulation of the human end. That end is not in itself incomprehensible, but has been revealed in the Word made Flesh. The modern world has missed the mark; but there is a mark. There is a principle of human consolidation which is imperishable and not impossible for men to know and practice.

Crowns and thrones may perish,  
Kingdoms rise and wane,  
But the Church of Jesus  
Constant will remain.

### *The Rival Humanists*

The Church persists, because in it are asserted the true nature of man and of his end, and the true mode and principle of human achievement. The Tractarians recalled their generation to that divinely given basis: to the necessary dogmatic assertion: to the necessary discipline of mind and will. The secularists believed that such requirements were irrelevant to the task of seizing and enjoying the fruits of this world, so palpable, so easily to be touched. How by some fateful alchemy the positivist purpose has turned them into Dead Sea fruit and apples of discord, we are now to discover.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE MATERIAL COLLAPSE OF SECULARISM

We have seen that the positivist exaltation of man, devoid of either metaphysical principle or spiritual faith, was nevertheless conceived as capable of vindication, in the living self-realisation of human power which it would release. There was abroad in the world a self-satisfied estimate, more and more firmly established throughout the nineteenth century, that man, at any rate in the Western world, had reached an adult life in which his mature powers were being evoked and engaged upon the real human operation, namely, the expansion of human competence, the intensification of human force in the control of the visible order. Compared with the nineteenth century and its gigantic achievements accumulating in ever-multiplying complexity, variety and sheer immensity, previous ages and their particular pre-occupations appeared as the dreaming childhood and irresponsible youth of the race. And further, there was a generally accepted notion that the modern movement, so securely directed in its broad,

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safe channel, so enriched with a constantly improving scientific technique, must necessarily continue until it had brought mankind to an unprecedented and unpredicted mastery of his material environment. Already it had transformed the civilisation of the West, and seemed bound to draw into its onward motion the hitherto unmoving East, and the untutored wilds of Africa.

It is true that, to the majority of men, the onwardness of the motion was so surprising and majestic a fact, that the question of its direction faded from their minds. Those who received the secular presuppositions usually managed to forget certain pertinent but uncomfortable considerations which must otherwise have disturbed their complacency. For example, it came to be assumed that the doctrine of biological evolution, as taught upon a basis of naturalism, meant that man was the true heir of the world: and that in his modern achievements he was entering upon his inheritance. But obviously, such a valuation placed upon the human enterprise, as the conclusion of naturalistic evolutionism, was no more than sentimental, arbitrary and really unimaginative. No reason was adduced for supposing that man was the end of the evolutionary chain. The vigour and massiveness of his modern success could



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give no final assurance as to human significance, for secularism has no ultimate canons or criteria of significance beyond the positive human success, the value of which is here in question. And there was indeed no certainty that even the modern success would not ultimately cease, for the belief that science would prove adequate to all possible contingencies was quite gratuitous in minds lacking any faith in a supernatural purpose above and within human life.

Yet the mood of optimism prevailed, and sufficed to uphold the assurance of the Western world, even in face of the growing body of criticism which pointed with sharpening cogency to the human suffering and frustration which the "progress" of the industrial age had actually produced. And since, as the nineteenth century wore on, it appeared that there was upon the whole a raising of the material level of life for large numbers of men; and because, moreover, the more enlightened forces of liberalism were concerned to ameliorate by legislation the worst effects of industrialism, while the overflow of the vast aggregations of wealth could be tapped by taxation and by charitable organisation, the majority of Christians were disposed to accept the system, and, less deliberately and consciously, the aims, of capitalist industrialism, and to assume that

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the whole modern movement needed no more than a spirit of Christian kindness to make of it a powerful instrument of the Kingdom of God.

There now looms before us the inevitable disillusion. The modern motive and the particular organisation of human activity which it has dictated can produce ultimately no Kingdom at all, whether of God or man. It can produce only a chaotic self-contradiction in which man's powers are stifled by false theories and his very manhood emasculated by the circumstances which those theories have induced. We have seen how man's inner life is diminished and impoverished. What we have now to examine is the defeat and collapse of secularism upon the exterior fields of social and economic life. For this, at least, is a demonstration which secularism is bound to accept. So long as it seemed possible to hold that such human suffering and limitation, as were obvious effects of the modern approach to the world, were capable of being eliminated by the further victories of worldliness, the modern motive could be defended. But now that it is clear that a secularised industrialism cannot employ or feed or clothe the workers, or run the machines which human inventiveness has devised, or utilise fruitfully the masses of gold which the world has hoarded as wealth; now

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that the secular process has lost the power to achieve even its own accepted ends, the whole assumption of secular humanism is doomed.

The confusion and decline in the world of human effort, the stupefaction of statesmanship in face of a palpable and definite problem of which the superficial appearance seems to warrant the secularist opinion that its whole nature is quantitative, the steady reduction of the standard of life, the surprising reversal of all that onward motion which, a generation ago, seemed so sure, necessarily places before the Church a tremendous question. The dualism which attempts to treat the economic order, either as a natural field having its own permanent laws to which all men, regardless of their moral ideals, must submit, or as part of that "nature" amidst which the soul is buffeted upon its way to the next world, is answered by the fact that the doings of men may so affect the economic order as to evoke appalling problems for the soul and for society. It is our thesis that a false approach to life, an inadequate spiritual vision, has now actually produced an economic *impasse* which menaces the material bases of man's life and so imperils the whole cultural and ideal edifice reared upon them.

In this situation it is no longer possible for the

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Church to accept the economic aims and methods of the modern world as valid in their order. It is impossible for ordinary human sanity so to accept them. And if their insufficiency arises from a fundamental error of the human spirit, then manifestly the Church is presented with an opportunity for clear and cogent utterance such as has scarcely come to her for some centuries. But merely to offer oracular assertions will be of little effect in a world driven crazy by the practical problem. It will be necessary to demonstrate the links of connection between the first defection of the modern spirit and the final confusion of the modern markets; between the assumptions of positivism and the facts of poverty. Nor may we rest at that point; for if there may be a Christian criticism of a secular sociology, there must obviously be an alternative sociology, springing from those mystical, sacramental and theological sources from which arises the Christian attitude to life.

It is important to remember at this point that the failure of the Church to exert in the modern period that guidance of economic activity which it had, not entirely unsuccessfully, attempted in the mediæval world, was due to the emergence of a certain problem at a time when the Church's decadence precluded even

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a serious attempt at a solution. The growth of large-scale undertakings in commerce and manufacture, and the consequent necessity for loans in the form of investment, raised a perplexing question for the Church's teaching with regard to usury. The condemnation of interest upon the old loans for consumption manifestly could not be extended without qualification to the new loans for production, unless it could be shown, first that the large-scale undertakings forced the craftsmen and small traders into their service; and, secondly, that the payment of interest upon money invested in those enterprises caused a reduction in the standard of life of those who were compelled to serve them. These were speedily found to be questions of great complexity.

Thanks largely to Mr. Tawney, we know that to make the line of demarcation between the mediæval economic and modern capitalism coincide with the Reformation, is a false procedure.<sup>1</sup> Yet it is true that the new economic, escaping from the guidance of the Church and attaining a wide prevalence in an age when men's minds were turning away from the acceptance of religion as the centre of life, speedily began to accept axioms which were utterly irreconcilable with

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Chaps. II and III. The opposite view is strongly suggested in *An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation*, by G. O'Brien, 1923.

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Christian teaching; and that these axioms were eventually exalted to the position of natural laws which, however harsh they might appear, were irrefragable.

Thus the very purpose of the "loans for production" was affected by a changed conception of the purpose of work, and by the growth of what to the mediæval mind, following Aristotle,<sup>2</sup> was a heresy, the doctrine of "the fecundity of money." The end of human labour was now conceived in a fashion which undoubtedly transferred the chief importance from human welfare, at first to the production of commodities, and later to the mere accumulation of investable capital. Nor is it difficult to perceive the connection between this shifting of economic aims and the change of spiritual outlook. We have seen how S. Antonino of Florence linked labour to the heavenly vision.<sup>3</sup> Between even the most menial tasks and the attainment of beatitude lay a series of mediate ends which were clothed with significance and provided with rational directivity by their final end. It is no sufficient reply to say that in the middle ages there were many who disregarded this teaching. The point is that the teaching was promulgated by an authority which had wide ac-

<sup>2</sup> For the Aristotelian conception of the nature and function of money, see *The Nichomachean Ethics*, Bk. V, Chap. V.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. pp. 123 f.

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ceptance. It was regarded at least as presenting a desirable and not impossible norm.

But when men lost faith and interest in the heavenly vision, they quickly fell into confusion with regard to the mediate ends. Work had been important, because it was the necessary means of satisfying human needs. But the value of the process of satisfying need must be determined by an estimate of the value of virtuous life and its result in spiritual felicity, for these ends gave to work its true significance. If those ends are in doubt, men will begin to doubt also whether the satisfaction of the general need is worth while unless that task can be made to produce some other result. The sense of community begins to fade and the self emerges in the foreground, demanding the satisfaction of its released cravings. The symbol of that satisfaction is money, regarded no longer as a means of the interchange of goods, but as the means of power, and therefore as possessing value in itself. And when money becomes the chosen objective, first the human need, and later the nature of the commodities produced, lose their old importance.

This was the fundamental post-renaissance error in the economic sphere. The adoption of a purely human end of human activity had the direct result of substitut-

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ing for human welfare an end which must inevitably demand of man the forfeiture of his sovereignty, and must require the limitation of human nature to the grim necessities of an economic mechanism. It had once been announced that it was impossible to serve God and Mammon. But while the service of God is the liberation of the human spirit, the service of Mammon is its enslavement and emasculation.

There is now in the world a proposed alternative. The great battle of the future will not be between some who desire to retain the present order and others who wish to replace it by another. For the present order is approaching its end. Soon it will not be here for any one to defend, and those who now spend much time in denouncing it are wasting energy. Why its collapse is to be regarded as inevitable, we shall presently see. But the actual conflict with which we must be concerned is that between those who desire a new world-order as the sacramental expression of the Eternal, and those who desire a new world-order as in itself the adequate and self-sufficient environment of mankind. For Communism offers itself as the alternative to the service of God and the service of Mammon. It presents itself as the service of man. But the whole post-renaissance movement intended such a humanistic



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end, and what has become of it we are now inquiring. And whether Communism can ever discover a human end capable of at once satisfying the spirit of man and sustaining the communist economic may be doubted, in view of the whole humanistic story. It looks rather as if Communism and Fascism are but the last analysis of the exhausted post-renaissance error; but this discussion must engage our attention further at a later stage.

What we have now to observe is that the modern period has exhibited an amazing expansion of material resources, governed by a motive which not only proved disastrous to the spiritual dignity of man, and did not merely fail to lift the myriads of the world's workers into the security of good life, but eventually brought the whole expanding process to a swift contraction and the vaunted economic activity to a strange standstill. Up to a certain point, the charge against capitalist industrialism was perforce mainly moral; that it was incapable of doing justice amongst men. The force of that charge is not now diminished; but it is accompanied by another of perhaps even greater dramatic force.

So long as the system was supposed to possess logical validity, it was possible either to argue that the natural

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harshness of economic law could not be overcome, or to suggest that in due course the masses of men would be enabled to rise to a more satisfactory material level of life: that either the system was harsh because it was natural; or was capable of eventually mollifying the asperities which were incidental to its development. It would not be unjust to say that these two views were in some measure reflected in the thought of the English Conservative and Liberal parties respectively, during the half-century before the Great War. But the charge which the system has now to meet, a charge based not merely upon a moral judgment but upon a logical inference from huge and patent facts, is that it is itself a self-contradiction, and is now at length demonstrably incapable of achieving its own ends. The accusation is that the inherent fallacy of capitalist industrialism, successfully concealed by circumstances which are to be examined, is now exposed; and that we are face to face, not with a temporary economic dislocation, but with "one of the major crises in the history of man."<sup>4</sup> "On a purely secular view," says Fr. Demant, "this complex of technical equipment, organisation and theory is manifestly breaking down."<sup>5</sup>

Whether the system was to be judged natural and

<sup>4</sup> V. A. Demant, *This Unemployment*, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

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rational or unnatural and irrational, whether its end was to be regarded as human or inhuman, its innate tendencies were more clearly articulated and its movement toward its logical end was accelerated, by the coming of the machine. When in 1768 Arkwright set up his spinning frame, and in 1769 James Watt produced his separate steam-condenser; when in 1807 Robert Fulton launched his first successful steamboat, and George Stephenson in 1814 constructed his first locomotive, it is safe to say that nobody had any prevision of the profundity of the problem that they were introducing. The system of Capitalist industrialism accepted the machine with avidity as an invincible weapon. It was to learn after more than a century that it had accepted the instrument of its own doom.

Concerning the machine it is perhaps necessary to remind ourselves of one or two elementary considerations. With the greatest deference to that sincere and very able writer, Mr. A. J. Penty, I cannot avoid the conclusion that to assume that the machine is inevitably an origin of social chaos is unwarrantable. The machine is an honest product of that human reason which the Church regards as honourable. Its natural and obvious purpose, the production of a desired effect with a lessened expenditure of labour, is the purpose

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of a wheel-barrow, a box of matches, or a fountain-pen. And to assert that the results of the use of machinery for the ends of Capitalist industrialism now demand the abrogation of the machine, seems an unjustified doctrine. To ask that the instrument which has produced evil, only because it has more swiftly exposed the fallacy of the system which has so far employed it, shall now be dispensed with, is to make an unnecessary request. It is to confess that man is not big enough to divert a means to a new end: that so long as the machine exists, he is fated to remain its helpless helot. And this appears to me a kind of superstition.<sup>6</sup>

The question of the effects of machinery upon the minds and bodies of the workers, and upon the quality of the goods produced, raises a complicated discussion which is necessarily connected with much wider sociological issues. An enlightening treatment of the whole problem is to be found in Maurice Reckitt's *Faith and Society*.<sup>7</sup> The main point to be remembered at this stage is that the employment of the machine by an economic having for its end the aggregation of money-capital, produces effects which are no guide to the nature of the results which would be achieved by the

<sup>6</sup> A. J. Penty, *Post-Industrialism, Towards a Christian Sociology*, and several works on the Guild System.

<sup>7</sup> Pp. 342-359.

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employment of the machine for the true object of work—the satisfaction of human need. Here, indeed, is a consideration of great importance, to which we shall be compelled to return; for it is vital for all conceptions of a future world-order.

The failure of the secular thesis upon the plane of the practical organisation of human activity, was expedited by the use of machinery for the economic end which had come to be generally accepted. It was the machine that added force to the Marxian argument that the deprivation of the workers of the necessary means of work robbed them of the surplus-value of their labour. For since industry was now so largely conducted by machine-plant, not only were the owners of the instruments apparently in a more secure position than ever, but there was no means of compelling them to distribute that greater surplus which the machines secured. It was the machine that seemed to add point to Lassalle's demonstration of the "iron law of wages"; for the "wage of the machine" was never employed to raise the subsistence level of the workers.

The ownership of the instrument, secured by the investment of amassed capital, was explained by the orthodox economists as resulting from the "abstinence" of the investors.<sup>8</sup> But what they did not explain was

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, Vol. I, p. 289, *et seq.*

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the origins of the right of the investors to the "reward of a voluntary abstinence," usually exercised far above the grinding anxieties of the subsistence line, while in fact that reward was manifestly procured in large part at the expense of the *enforced abstinence* of the workers from any considerable progress beyond that line. The stark and indisputable fact, which is now generally recognised as an elemental characteristic of capitalist industrialism, is that by the method of the investment of dividends, constituting so large a proportion of the product of industry, in the further expansion of the identical process, it diverted its operation from the natural purpose of satisfying the human demand, to the end of a blind self-inflation. The system could not do other than perpetually enlarge itself, and perpetually repeat across the earth's surface that disparity of distribution which was essential for its own sightless growth. It was destined thus to develop its meaning for human life—a meaning not fully explicated, however, until it was discovered that in becoming universal, the system had become impossible.

What machine industry, directed by the capitalist motive, has meant for individuals and society, has been the subject of an extensive literature during the past half-century,<sup>9</sup> and there is no need for us to dwell at

<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g., S. and B. Webb, *Decay of Capitalist Civilisation*; R. H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society*.

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length upon its human effects. It has relatively widened the distance between rich and poor. It has produced a class war. It has destroyed the last remnants of the sense of human solidarity, and has replaced it by the regimentation of the poor by their rulers. It has engendered widespread ugliness and has befouled fair countrysides. It has herded the poorest of the people in unspeakable slums. It has evicted the soul from labour. It has regarded the worker as a tool when working and as encumbrance when unemployed. It has vulgarised the idea of education. It has commercialised art and amusement. It has distorted the functions of the newspaper. It has exacerbated the relations of the nations. It has bullied and corrupted the backward races. The indictment might be almost indefinitely prolonged. But the fiercest invective seemed to make comparatively little impression in face of the contention that the system was natural and necessary, and in view of the indisputable fact that it had, by its massive instrumentation, enabled a gigantic productivity which had enormously increased the total material resources of the world. How, upon an inhuman and unnatural assumption, with self-contradiction at its very core, this system was able to reach so vast an achievement; and why, at length, its self-contradiction

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finally exposed, the system is doomed, we have now to see.

The employment of machinery for the purpose of amassing further investable capital, by increasing the margin of profit through the disposal of a greater bulk of commodities without a corresponding increase of costs, could appear a safe and sane operation only upon certain presuppositions. These were, that there was in the world at least a potential market for the goods; and that production itself must eventually create its own consuming power. The former of these assumptions needed far more careful qualification than it received, if it was to be accepted as permanently trustworthy. The second appeared true only because the essential conditions of machine production were not disentangled from certain operating but fortuitous conditions of the period. But their acceptance facilitated the emphasis upon production as the first consideration of industry; and this in turn encouraged the creation of innumerable devices for increasing the amount, and diminishing the costs, of production.

We have now to notice the demonstration of the unsafety of these hypotheses, provided by our present economic situation. For the remarks of Fr. Demant are true enough: "To-day the producer and seller are pur-



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suing the buyer." "On the average it now costs more to sell than to produce an article. . . . The enormously artificial and strained effort to persuade the population of the world to buy goods and services indicates that the real, healthy and natural kind of social control that is necessary is the control exercised by the public as consumers in directing the policy of production. . . . The present business envisagement of the consumer as a poor tool to be sharpened up into an efficient co-operation with production is an inversion of the true social order, a reversal of economic sanity. A true order would be based upon the truth that consumption is logically prior to production, that it is more fundamentally true that we produce to live, than that we consume in order that we may produce and trade."<sup>10</sup>

Obviously, the substitution of machine industry for manual craft, upon the axiom that production is the first thing to be sought, must create a new economic situation. A market for the greater volume of commodities must be found. It cannot be discovered in a large increase in the number of purchases within the geographical area previously supplied by hand crafts, unless there follow, in fact, a general increase of purchasing power. And since machines can supply the old demand with a much smaller employment of hu-

<sup>10</sup> V. A. Demant, *This Unemployment*, pp. 135, 137.

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man labour, it would seem that the machine at once poses to its owners the question whether they shall employ all the available workers upon short shifts, distributing to them a fair share of the profits gained by the relative increase of production in each hour of work; or merely dispense with the surplus of workers, paying those retained the old wage for the old hours, and pocketing for themselves the wage now earned by the machine over and above any reasonable return upon the outlay of capital involved in the machine's purchase and upkeep. The Capitalist motive could give only one answer to this question. The decision was that if machines could do the work of men, the prospects of amassing capital for further investment in the same process were brightened. It is not surprising, therefore, that the large-scale introduction of machinery into England was followed by the Luddite Riots, in which the workers revolted against the machine because, relieving them from the burden of labour, it became a threat to their very lives.

That explosion of violent resentment passed, because it was found that an actual lessening of the costs of production and the consequent possible cheapening of the machine-made articles, could actually procure considerably larger sales within the old areas of distribution. This momentary alleviation fortified the belief

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that production creates its own consuming power; and the machines, gradually improved and speeded, poured forth an ever-increasing abundance of products. But the real question of the creation of a permanently adequate "effective demand" in view of the new scale of production was thus shelved. The essential ratio between productive and consumptive power was not sufficiently examined. And as soon as the new demand slackened from its first awakened impetus, the problem was again exposed: How can purchasing power be maintained, under a machine industry, when the demand can be met by machines employing only a portion of the available labour; when the very supersession of labour by machinery deprives the displaced workers of the wages which would constitute purchasing power? The machines make the goods, but they do not use them and cannot buy them. Great numbers of men, no longer required in industry, though the volume of production still swells, are therefore without power to purchase what they need. Their inability lessens the demand upon the industrial output, creating further unemployment and further diminishing the totality of effective demand.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> For the following analysis I am so greatly indebted to Fr. Demant, in *This Unemployment*, that it is impossible to indicate particular passages for reference. The book deserves the most careful study, both for its exposure of the "self-contradiction" and for its criticism of the inadequacy of the financial basis of distribution.

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That was the problem, born of the inner self-contradiction of which we have spoken. It loomed from time to time in the slumps and depressions of the nineteenth century, but the system was saved by certain lucky alleviations and adventitious circumstances. It retained its glowing self-confidence, because it accepted these fortuitous aids as the expression of its own innate competence. The demonstration of the self-contradiction of the system which the machine must inevitably accelerate was deferred by two causes. In the first place, the development of the technique of machine construction occupied several generations, and during that period the use made of machinery by various industries was very unequal. Thus the enormous weight of production of which a thoroughly mechanised industry is capable was not experienced even in the industrial countries. A network of considerations controlled the pace of the mechanising process: and it is not difficult to see that in some less advanced stages of the invention and adoption of machinery, the pressure of production which today bewilders the world, was impossible.

The problem must, however, have emerged even then, and in some critical form, had it not been that throughout the nineteenth century a world-market was being opened up. The industrial nations of Europe, with England in the van, were eager in the exploration

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of virgin lands, ever ready to gain colonies or dependencies, or to enlarge their "spheres of influence." From the distant ends of the earth came the raw materials for industry, and the products of the machines were sent far and wide. In this way, the surplus of commodities which the machines produced, but which the system could not allow the machine operatives to purchase, was disposed of.

For the system was concerned to extract from the process of production the means to the extension of production rather than to secure the ability to purchase its goods. It was believed with childlike faith that if the goods were made, they *must* be consumed—somehow the means of purchasing them must automatically arise; but that unless by means of adequate dividends for investment the process of production were constantly expanded, economic demand itself would somehow cease. The unfortunate point for the machine workers, in this theory, was that it would not allow *them* a sufficient wage to enable them to consume or save the equivalent of what they produced. The surplus, existing first as saleable goods, must be disposed of in other areas in order that it might eventually be realised as an investable surplus undiminished by any leakage in the shape of increased purchasing power

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provided by the productive operation. Hence the English workers were kept more or less busy: the system did not come to a standstill, so long as that surplus of goods could be turned into investable capital by shipping it overseas. Here is a prominent feature of that amazing edifice of world trade upon which modern industrialism, particularly in Britain, has prided itself.

And if the theory seemed on occasions to fail, it could, like other forms of magical belief, be given an appearance of effectiveness by the exercise of human wits. No extraordinary degree of perspicuity is required, in order to see that if the object of producing a surplus of goods above the permitted capacity of the producers to purchase, be the amassing of investable capital, that object must be defeated if the goods-surplus of an industrial country be merely exchanged for some equal foreign or colonial surplus of commodities. For the imported surplus would be no more consumable by the available purchasing power, than was the exported surplus.<sup>12</sup> It could not thus be the means of procuring an investable money surplus. It must either be placed upon the home market to be exchanged for the permitted measure of buying power, thus reducing the general price-level; or given away to the poor and

<sup>12</sup> We are here speaking of the "surplus" as defined, and not of the proper and reasonable exchange of required goods.

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starving—with yet more atrocious and unthinkable economic results. More probably, in accordance with the requirements of the system, it would be burnt or thrown into the sea in the place where it was produced. For to satisfy human need is not the end for which that system was devised.

But since the new countries and colonies could be persuaded that they needed “developing,” it was found possible to dispose of the home surplus by advancing to them huge loans or credits, usually with the attached condition that the money must be spent in the lender country. And the interest upon the loan or credit must be paid, not in goods (which would only present once more the problem of an embarrassing goods-surplus), but in money—for the object of the system, we must again remark, was not to provide people with goods needed, but to find the money necessary to enlarge the scale of production so that still more money, and yet more production might accrue. Still, it can be seen how this arrangement helped to keep the machines at work. Loans produced “booms” in home industry; but since they did not bring an equivalent of imports in return for the larger volume of exports, the very fact that by stimulating more employment at home they increased the mass of effective demand in the home

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market, meant a rise in prices and a reduction in the "real wage" of the worker.<sup>13</sup> We shall presently see how this practice assisted in the exposure of the intrinsic idiocy of the whole system. We shall see the Nemesis which was all the time following in the track of this stupendous, misdirected, artificial traffic which placed the false glamour of gold above the divinely established realities of need and satisfaction which are the true foundations of a natural economic, because they alone can be made significant by the final end of the heavenly vision.

What we have now to grasp, what we have now to accept and ponder with the gravest reflection, is that the adventitious circumstances which enabled a capitalist industry to employ machine production and dispose of a sufficient bulk of commodities to keep people at work, have passed, never to return. We have arrived at a totally new phase of the development. We have reached the exposure of the "self-contradiction." The system, in Fr. Demant's carefully chosen words, is "manifestly breaking down."<sup>14</sup> We are not at this point concerned primarily with its morality, but with its logic; and we shall see that with the passing of the

<sup>13</sup> For a vigorous analysis of the mechanism of over-seas loans, see F. E. Holsinger, *The Mystery of the Trade Depression*.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 12.



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favourable conditions, the exhaustion of the possibility of chance alleviations, the system, now forced to live upon its own resources, fails to operate because it is attempting an impossible task.

In the first place we have to consider that machine technology has now reached an astonishing degree of productive efficiency. The present potential productivity of the machine is a fact of which the economic significance is difficult to exaggerate. If the effective demand, or purchasing power, were there, it would be possible to flood the world's markets with goods, and still the industrial process could not absorb the available labour. The Vice-President of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers has said that with proper social planning, the engineers in the United States "could provide raw material, machinery and trained labour sufficient to flood, bury and smother the population in such an avalanche of food, clothing, shelter, luxuries and material refinements as no Utopian dreamer in his busiest slumbers has ever conceived."<sup>15</sup> No sociology is worth consideration unless it makes an attempt to come to terms with this emergent and gigantic factor of the new machine technology.

The more recent stages of machine development pre-

<sup>15</sup> Quoted by H. W. Laidler in *The Christian Way Out*, p. 61 (Witness Publishing Company).

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sent an enthralling picture, even to those who have no knowledge of engineering science. The technicians are now called in to serve not only the heavy industries which deal with their materials in great bulk, but almost every conceivable branch of industry. The very connotation of "production" is changing before our eyes. When one is told of a machine plant which, with sixty men operating it, does far more work than two thousand men could perform in the same factory a few years ago; or of a laundry where, with eight women working, more work is done than was previously accomplished in the same place by fifty or sixty women: and when one reflects that this sweeping process of mechanisation is now extended to the whole field of human industry, the nature of the problem begins to disclose itself.<sup>16</sup>

The problem is terrific in the complexity of its social ramifications, but surprisingly simple in its central principle. Within any given area of production and distribution, it is impossible for modern industry any longer to be efficient and *also* to provide employment upon the old scale. The technological advance would make it impossible even with a considerable rise of

<sup>16</sup> Michael Flurscheim, *The Clue to the Economic Labyrinth*, describes the mechanical progress of the nineteenth century. Stuart Chase, *Men and Machines*, is the important work for recent developments. See also Demant, *op. cit.*, Chap. III.

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purchasing power within that area; and at present, the moment the machines begin working to capacity, they begin also to pile up an enormous surplus of commodities which, with the decrease of required employment and consequently diminished money earnings, is less saleable than ever. To maintain even the relatively small volume of labour needed to work the new machines, it is therefore more than ever necessary, upon the present basis of distribution, that an expanding foreign and colonial market should be found.

But here the path is blocked by two insuperable barriers. We have seen that it was of the nature of the Capitalist industrial system to expand, and that out of the fruits of production it diverted from the rational ends of adequate consumption an unjustifiable proportion which, after allowing for the maintenance of a satisfying or even luxurious life-level for the investing classes, went, by means of re-investment, into the expansion of the productive organisation. This was a feasible and profitable process only so long as the demands of a widening market were also expanding. What has eventually happened was dictated by the expansive nature of the system. The movement of productive expansion has now overflowed into what were once the areas of consumption for the surplus products

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of the older industrial countries. In a score of such areas which once received streams of industrial commodities from the older producing nations, machine industries have arisen and now operate upon a great scale; and everywhere there is a like production of an unsaleable surplus, without the full employment of available labour. Industrially, with regard to the present purchasing ability of its entire population, the world is overcrowded with its producing organisations.

We have, then, this position. Two factors, the advancing capacity of the machine to produce, and the spread of machine production to new areas, both factors remaining under the control of the Capitalist purpose, have added an enormous mass of commodities to the world's total production, without anywhere sufficiently altering the theoretical ratio of effective demand to the totality of consumable goods. Indeed, in so far as the inevitable effect must be widespread technological unemployment, what has happened, what was bound to happen, and what cannot be altered without a fundamental change in the basis of distribution, is that not only has the ratio of demand to production, extended over the earth's surface by the spread of the system, left a vastly more massive total "surplus," but the practical ability to purchase the surplus is positively diminished.

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We saw in this situation the logical result of a system which produced for the sake of amassing capital, for further production for further capital, and not primarily for the purpose of meeting human need. It is now quite unable effectively to distribute the ability to consume its own products. But there are further elements in this astonishing economic congestion. The method of sustaining exports from the older industrial lands, by means of loans to the new food and raw-material producing countries, has become embarrassed by the unwillingness or inability of those countries to receive loans, the interest upon which they may not pay with their own products. For they also have their own unsaleable surpluses. Holsinger argues that most of these new countries are over-capitalised.<sup>17</sup> The slackening of demand from the older lands, due to the general "depression," makes it less possible for them to pay in money the huge sums of interest incurred by their previous loans. Fr. Demant accepts Holsinger's argument and states a relevant fact. "The debtor nations could send goods into the country to the tune of £150 millions per year without our having to employ a single man for half an hour in production for export. They owe it to us for surplus goods exported up till

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*

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now."<sup>18</sup> But their incapacity for further large borrowing is another formidable barrier against the disposal of the surplus of goods manufactured in the creditor countries. And in addition to this, several debtor countries which not long since were producing only food and raw materials, have now entered the arena of machine industry and are producing industrial surpluses of their own.

We have reached a condition in which the original self-contradiction has multiplied into many. We have a machine industry which cannot at once be technologically efficient and continue to work. It looks as if the moral ineptitude of the chosen purpose has the effect of frustrating the human reason expressed in the discovery of means. We have a system which, the more efficiently it is conducted, the more certainly it reaches deadlock. The very aims of capitalist industrialism have secured their own defeat. For, failing to distribute consuming power, failing to consider human need as the prime object of labour, it has reached the point where all its vast potentialities for production are foiled. And as long as the consumption of goods depends upon the earning of a wage for employment which a machine industry can now no longer provide, there must

<sup>18</sup> Those goods of course were the embodiment of the loans or credits advanced to the debtor countries. Cf. Demant, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

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be a weakened demand for goods, effecting a decrease of production and thus producing further unemployment.

The methods so far adopted for meeting this menacing challenge to the spirit of man are both alike futile. I am not judging their value excepting as they are offered as solutions of our present problem. "Rationalisation" was ineffective, because it was an attempt to maintain and increase a hold upon foreign markets by the method of cutting down the costs of home production. In so far as this involved further displacement of labour, it at once lessened purchasing power in the home market. But in any case it was hopeless, because it is a game at which all may play. Probably the main effect of the adoption of "rationalisation" by all the industrial countries has been the opening of a wider abyss between productive and consumptive potentiality. My own country has now turned to tariffs, with the innocent hope of at least capturing the British and Empire markets, blissfully forgetful of the fact that upon the permitted ratio of production and purchasing power, it must always have a surplus which it will not allow its own people to buy. And as the disposal of the accumulated surplus will need no employment, the goods being already made, it is impossible to get rid of it in England or in our colonies

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without diminishing the demand upon current manufacture. It must thus appear that even the redistribution of the gold hoards amassed by the post-war financial policy, to the purposes of producers' credit, which some regard as a sure means of escape from our troubles, would not solve the problem of how the world is to maintain its employment by purchasing a world surplus of goods for which it never has the necessary effectiveness of demand.

We have not yet arrived at the point when we may suggest measures for the extrication of industry from this appalling tangle. But the historical and critical portion of our study would be seriously incomplete if we failed to mention here a certain most relevant and indeed capital and permanent factor in the economic confusion. It is clearly necessary that the power to consume, in other words, the power to live, must be distributed upon some other basis than that of work, which even the most adequate stream of production can no longer provide. What stands in the way of this necessary reformulation of the philosophy of public credit is the established method which theoretically bases exchange upon a currency whereof the final sanction is a certain metallic commodity limited in amount. Thus credit, the only conceivable fount of which is that real wealth which is the product of nature and of



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human labour and skill, is artificially limited by being based, not upon the actuality of realised or potential production for human need, so that men may buy what is produced, but upon the potentiality of production for profit ultimately estimable in terms of gold. Consequently, with the shrinking of industrial activity owing to lack of demand, according to our analysis, we discover the ludicrous truth that lack of purchasing power, and not lack of things to purchase, becomes a reason for the *further* limitation of purchasing power. There seems only one logical end to such a process.

A system of exchange which grew up in an economic of factual, if relative, scarcity, has become an anachronism in a day of abundance. For it is the fact, as the Reports of the Economic Section of the League of Nations prove, that the production of food and raw material has for some time been outstripping the growth of the world's population. To suppose, therefore, that our present money-system is grounded in some natural and abiding necessity is to dwell with dreams. For clearly, if the process continues, accumulations of capital must become as useless as the unusable labour—a climax which actually threatens us from time to time.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Ruth Kenyon, *Catholic Faith and the Industrial Order*, Chap. V; Reckitt, *Faith and Society*, p. 373 *et seq.*; Demant, *This Unemployment*, p. 88 *et seq.*, p. 147 *et seq.*

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At all events, we have to assert that the cutting down of human resources and decent satisfactions, the deprivation of man, the sacrifice of the blood of the poor, for the sake of maintaining for some the now precarious benefits of a theory of exchange which is manifestly untrue to reality, is a disgrace to the modern intelligence. It is the culminating self-contradiction, that money, the mere medium for the interchange of real wealth, should have been allowed to become the criterion of wealth, so that in a world teeming with abundance and immensely rich in potential production of what men need for life, the money-control is able to enforce scarcity, economy and limitation, and to translate the bounty of God into a threadbare and anxious penury. Confronting this spectacle, even responsible economists proceed to contradict one another and themselves in a general confusion of thought, which is only accentuated and enlarged by the politicians.<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile two real dangers threaten our civilisation. Where is the slow decline of economic vigour to end, and to what calamities, material, psychological and spiritual will the process bring us? The method of meeting the danger by the enforced reduction of money-

<sup>20</sup> Demant, *op. cit.*, p. 79, *et seq.*, in which M. René Duchenin, Sir A. Balfour, Sir A. M. Samuel, Mr. J. M. Keynes, Mr. J. A. Hobson, Sir Josiah Stamp, Sir Hugh Bell, Professor Clay, and others are found to contribute to the confusion.

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expenditure can only increase the danger; for it is to compel men to add to the pressure that is already strangling them. The advice that we should spend more, while our incomes are being lopped and trimmed, is either cynical or insane. The years are passing, and the gigantic edifice of our Western success is sliding into decay. What this means in terms of human suffering it is impossible to compute. But we have seen the emergence of a despairing flippancy, a flight from an apparently insoluble problem to the opiates of facile amusement; and when that mood changes we may behold the rise of a destructive violence, equally unintelligent but more uncomfortable, which may bring the modern order to ruin. The modern world has been enervated by its own unfounded assurance that social catastrophe had become impossible; but the rumour of that possibility is now abroad in the world.<sup>21</sup> It has been the drift of my argument, that the imminent peril has its origin in the attempt to order the life of man without reference to his supernatural end.

But the disintegration of the economic scheme is itself an important contributing cause of a second danger which hangs like a cloud over the doings of men and nations; and before we conclude our criticism of

<sup>21</sup> "A belief in the possibility of social catastrophe is as essential to the integrity of sociology, as a belief in the reality of hell in some form or other is necessary to theology."—A. J. Penty, *The Green Quarterly* (Summer, 1930), p. 140.

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the secular order, we must attempt some discussion of the problem and possibility of further armed international conflict. When one reflects how the history of man has everywhere been marked by warfare, and how Christendom itself in the Ages of Faith was unable to secure a final and lasting peace in Europe, it may seem unfair to say that the danger of calamitous conflict in the world to-day is due to the modern secularism. Yet I believe this to be the truth. The position requires some elucidation, for the precise problem is in some respects unique in history. We are not faced with the task of curbing dynastic ambitions or of checking the martial ardour of nations thirsting for the glory of conquest. There is, indeed, little sheer bellicosity in the world, and if war is still a dreadful possibility, if since 1918 armies and armaments have drained more deeply than ever the resources of various States, it is not because either the peoples or their leaders believe that war is a natural necessity for their self-expression. That simply is not the mental and spiritual atmosphere. And if it were, the Christian religion would not allow us to admit that mere pugnacity cannot be redeemed and sublimated.

The problem of peace to-day,<sup>22</sup> whatever it may have

<sup>22</sup> The following passages reproduce the substance of a paper read at a Christian Social Council conference on Human Nature and War, and published in *Christendom*, March, 1932.

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been in times past, is something more than the problem of human nature. Those who hold up the standard of peace are frequently informed that there are certain "facts of human nature" which their idealism cannot overcome. If it is meant that man is a creature whose fundamental nature is thwarted unless he can from time to time express himself in the wholesale destruction of his fellows, the proposition is patently absurd. For the facts are that the greater part of the human race has never personally engaged in armed conflict and has probably for ages regarded it with horror, and that even professional soldiers can satisfy their "fundamental nature" only sporadically and at relatively rare intervals. The human ego-complex, appropriating the national exploits as a means of self-inflation; or the herd-complex, circumscribed in scope and failing to realise its implicit universal end, may operate to multiply occasions of conflict; but in some circumstances they may prompt the pursuit of peace, even with dishonour. And undoubtedly, those "facts of human nature" insisted upon by some harlequins in helmets, have to some extent been neutralised by other facts of human nature in view of the realities of modern warfare.

We may assume that there is to-day little if any deliberate and conscious purpose of war. We are faced

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rather with the problem of human nature in certain conditions: of the nations of men thrust into a particular situation, from which there may appear at any moment to be no escape but in a conflict accepted as a more tolerable evil. There is such a thing as a totally immoral situation, a ground occupied which will admit of no just or reasonable action. So long as this is believed to be the only relatively secure standing place, it will seem a mad world indeed, and action will be unjust and unreasonable. When men are posed with a choice of evils, there can be no wonder if they choose an evil. To leap from his bedroom window is not what a normal man would ordinarily choose as a morning exercise. But if his house were on fire—nay, if he only believed his house to be on fire—and there were no other way out. . . .

I wish to emphasise the consideration that in the mental and material situation of the modern world as we now see it, war may at any time appear a less evil than the alternative which is ever pressing upon the peoples of the earth. The pacificism which merely announces the stupidity or the wickedness of war might serve in some simpler situation, but it now lacks realism, for the supposition that the nations as they are, in the conditions that now obtain, can be persuaded to

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lay down their arms because war is immoral or expensive or dangerous, is to demand of them volition *in vacuo*.

Unrealist evangelism has had its day. It never produced factual fruits. The charge that Christianity has persuaded the poor to neglect their earthly welfare for the hope of heaven hereafter, a charge still made by secular communists, is untrue for the simple reason that the average man is psychologically incapable of being persuaded to do anything of the sort. If the crowds were ever able to think much of personal religion, it was when their elementary physical needs were meeting with normal satisfaction. After the Industrial Revolution it was always a hard task to recommend religion to the dispossessed; and when men saw an opportunity of bettering their conditions, it was their trades unions, but not yet the Church, that became important in their eyes. You cannot convert a man against the whole psychological forces awakened by his experience. Nor can you so convert the nations. And when rational life is everywhere subjected to a perpetual irritant, developing at times into a serious threat, to recommend peace on earth is like advising health to a sick man.

There has existed in Europe and America for some

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generations a definite and perhaps increasing current of idealism opposing itself to war. Years before the Great War, publicists of several nations were insisting upon the common economic risk entailed in any conflict between the world's Great Powers. Since the War, the will for peace has sought a more definite instrumentation, even amidst the general moral slump. Moreover, economic stringency has made warlike adventure a luxury, unless it happens to seem a grim necessity. Yet there is no assured prospect of peace. The people of Europe and America do not desire war. Those responsible for the national exchequers dread the thought of it. The greatest military power of modern times has been humbled and disarmed. Yet still the preparation for war is part of the daily business of mankind. There is a will for peace, but it is thwarted, neutralised, inhibited by some factors evidently of cosmopolitan provenance. There is a widespread belief that another great war must prove nothing less than a paralysing disaster to the human race, but this has so far failed to direct the appropriate, intelligent action, because there are other elements in the public consciousness of every modern nation which effectively impede such response.

We must remark, then, in the first place that a gen-



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eral tenuity of moral faith is the natural product of the secularist outlook. We may have escaped the danger of theoretic materialism as an intellectual doctrine; but in its defection from the Faith the Western world has found no sure ground for belief in ultimate human value and dignity, and the result is a practical materialism of motive which is often shamefaced, but continues because there is not sufficient faith to outweigh fear. There is no hard and final dogma of man, and therefore the human outlook narrows to the sub-human.

Secondly, there is the consequently intensified conception of race or nation as providing the fundamental human value, a contingent value indeed, since it is manifestly not indestructible, but in the absence of any more profound, exercising the strictest claims upon men as the only symbol of the universal available. Recent political and economic tendencies seem to deepen the divisions between the nations. Not only is the situation exacerbated by the adoption of extreme and rival political and economic theories, as in Russia and Italy, but nationalism itself seems to be losing all sense of a counterbalancing and liberalising internationalism.

In the next place, we have to observe that in this situation the world is unequipped with the moral re-

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sources necessary to meet the most pertinent material factor of its unrest. The greater part of the world is now under the sway of the economic system whereof the later developments, as we have discovered, are full of unforeseen menace. It has been the proud boast of capitalist commerce that it has been the servant of a common civilisation and of a liberalising intercourse between the earth's peoples; though this is not completely proved by the fact that half the world's population washes with the same soap. But the claim of capitalist commerce to have created a common world interest could seem substantial only because the true effects of the system were for so long adventitiously concealed. Now that we have an industrialised world, its industry closely associated with a financial system with which governments are bound to collaborate, a situation has arisen in which each nation is frantically seeking to buttress its own credit by disposing of the unsaleable surplus of its own industrial and agricultural products in the world market, and by preventing its own nationals from consuming the surpluses of other nations. Meanwhile, with shrinking trade involving weakening credit, governments are ready to employ any temporary and artificial financial advantage for political ends. Every nation seems to desire to with-

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draw from the world when responsibilities are to be faced, and to recognise other nations only when they may be exploited. And so long as capitalist industrialism, employing a machine industry, produces everywhere a surplus of commodities the sale of which is necessary for the aims of the system but impossible by the methods of the system, national interests must be perpetually and dangerously opposed upon the economic field.

Finally, although the psychology of "glory" may have perished in a civilisation which has outgrown blustering youth, the psychology of mastery is active in certain notorious instances. The old-time millionaire who felt rather like a successful pugilist, even when he looked like a dyspeptic evangelist, is growing obsolete. The new millionaire keeps quiet his success, and is even inclined to conceal the fact of his own existence. But he has learned a hundred new ways of using his power, and he is disposed to value his millions, not for any applause they could win for him, but for the power over human destinies which he derives from them. In a similar fashion, the old glory of empire-building and painting maps in various colours fades before the new methods of secret financial mastery, whereby one power comes into a silent dictatorship

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and may effectively interfere with the intimate domestic politics of its neighbours, without moving a single soldier. It has at length been proved that the pen is mightier than the sword, when it can call in short-term loans with brilliant political results. But those who own no such pen may at any time be tempted again to essay their fortune by the sword.

The nations live under the danger of armed conflict, therefore, because what they have learned to conceive as the supreme human value, namely race or nationality, having inevitably become entangled with an impossible economic, is perpetually exposed to damage or destruction by the very mode in which it is now presented to the world. The very elevation of the nation to a virtual identity with the universal jeopardises it in a world of nations; and the risk is intensified when every nation is forced by the general economic to seek to make of other nations the instruments for the solution of its own internal problems. But whether this valuation of the nation be right or wrong, whether the super-sensitiveness of modern States concerning their own prestige be honourable or absurd, the fact remains that in the present conditions and upon the accepted assumptions, a further gigantic conflict is by no means inconceivable. Nerves may break under the

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strain, and wisdom may be thrown to the four winds.

No Christian world order is possible while those conditions and assumptions remain. Peace on earth must be the outcome of their removal. It is hopeless to expect the establishment of peace as the condition of their removal. It may, indeed, be argued that even the most expensive armaments cannot guarantee a nation's security. A nation may be armed, and conquered and beaten into the dust. It no doubt is sheer folly that the world's governments do not see this and act accordingly. But in order to such action they must already share some common confidence born of some common life of the spirit above, but also within, their nationalism. And it is just this which seems rather in danger of decline than to give promise of fruition.

If the nations have nothing but a common error to put into a common pool, it is futile to suppose that their conferences and consultations will produce much more than perplexity. Perhaps the limitation of armaments is the most that can be hoped from them. But the limitation of armaments alone is not in the least calculated to create permanent security. It is merely a device for the avoidance of bankruptcy. It is a symptom of, rather than a cure for, the real disease. The risk of a conflict endangering the survival of civilisa-

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tion will be dispelled only when the nations are enabled to live their own national lives in a world-community, discarding the "nationalism" which is an intrinsic threat to other nations. At present such "nationalism" is everywhere stimulated by the common economic.

But the protagonists of peace must become realists, if they are to be effective. They must be armed with the perception that modern nationalism has become the servant of the economic doctrine of life which is called in to justify it. The essential faults of capitalist industry and finance have deflected patriotism from a liberal sanity to a new and desperate mercantilism. Nor is there any hope from a collectivism which, like capitalism, founds upon a materialist-economic reading of human nature and destiny. So long as the economic operation is conceived as the human end, no truly humane ideology can be evolved. The strange but characterising feature of humanity is that the principle of its true socialisation cannot be discovered within earthly horizons, and must be sought in a transcendent sphere. It is only when work is governed by the sacramental idea of the realisation of spiritual ends through visible means, that a distinctively *human* co-operation emerges. Therefore it is necessary that the economic process shall minister directly to a human end that may be related

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to man's spiritual destiny. The setting aside of the human significance of labour is the actual but still fantastic fruit of a humanism confined to this world. And now the spirit of man must find deliverance from enslavement to an economic system which hampers and impoverishes him amidst the earth's bounty, torments him with grotesque contradictions, and invites him at length to preserve his last dim and defaced values amidst the conflagration of a war in which the significance of the human order may finally disappear from the earth.

Such, then, is the issue to which we have come, in the pursuit of human self-realisation apart from the supernatural end. Upon its own chosen field of material success, secularism has suffered a defeat which threatens to involve mankind in disaster. Cynicism, flippancy and gloom have supplanted the confidence of the generations which assured themselves of unfailing progress. A chill despair settles upon thinkers who are unsupported by faith. The world now knows that catastrophe is by no means excluded from the possibilities of the future. But if we have understood the faith and hope in which the Tractarians began upon their so unpromising task, we shall not waver, now that they are so far vindicated. Though all men despair, we shall

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not despair. By the Word made Flesh, by the Sign of the Holy Cross, by that most excellent mystery, the Church, we are pledged to a faith that cannot be shaken, to hope against hope that love may conquer a loveless world.

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; and the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”



## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE CHURCH

From the spectacle of bewilderment presented by our contemporary scene, we must now retrace our steps to the teaching of the Tractarians, and develop our judgment upon the social significance of their principles. I am well aware that the assertion that the Oxford Movement had as a necessary objective the defence of threatened human values may seem, upon a superficial view, fantastic and perverse. For we have not yet escaped the mental habit and atmosphere of the nineteenth century whereby the liberation of the human spirit was falsely associated with the abrogation of supernatural authority. The attempt to restore the Catholic idea of the Church may seem, therefore, to have been only one amongst many efforts of the dying forces of privilege and repression to hold mankind in a tutelage and a servitude from which man's true nature was struggling for deliverance. But we have seen that the ultimate sanctions of human dignity are contained in the basic Christian dogmas of which the Catholic Church has provided the most persistent defence. And

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we have observed that the emergence of a humanism which ignored those sanctions has proved calamitous for humanity.

Now, the essential nature of the contrast between the axioms and aims of the Oxford Movement and those of the secular and so-called "liberal" humanism which it confronted, is seen in the all-significant fact that the Tractarians discovered their sanctions of human value in association with a revived doctrine of the Church. I must defer for the moment any examination of the view that the Catholic Church is necessarily committed by its hierarchical structure to the maintenance of a society of status and privilege, only remarking that I believe that assumption to be entirely fallacious and to arise from an easily exposed confusion of thought. The point which I now desire to emphasise is that the Tractarian view of man's supreme and characterising activity, that namely which was concerned with his relation to God, involved the notion of his incorporation in a divinely integrated fellowship. And as the disintegration of his secular organisation proceeds, as its monstrous edifice crumbles, it is the idea of the Church, and indeed it is the mysterious fact of the Church, that must increasingly draw the eyes of men.

There has been for some time past, as we have al-

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ready seen, an increasing criticism of the view, once so widely accepted, that the Renaissance was a wholly admirable rebirth and uprising of the human spirit: a swift advance in human development constituting a veritable triumph over age-long barriers. There is now in the western world a deepening suspicion that in the excited extroversion of the Renaissance there was involved a loss of those combining and constructive factors which lie in the invisible and require an apprehension fundamentally religious; and further, it is seen that the later reaction of introversion, in minds thus severed from their invisible ground, must produce a further disintegration of the personal-social structure.

Thus, according to Dr. Karl Adam, when the "age of enlightenment" had completed one side of the work of the Renaissance, the "interior economy of man," his spiritual unity, was broken up into "a mere juxtaposition of powers and functions." The central citadel of the soul was surrendered, as the belief in man's personal, creative responsibility was lost. "The consciousness of being a personal agent, the creative organ of living powers, became increasingly foreign to the educated."<sup>1</sup> But this process of inner dissociation must necessarily produce results in the exterior association of

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit of Catholicism*, pp. 8, 9.

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men. For it simply is not the fact that society is secured from without. It is integrated from within, and its nature and achievements are determined by the souls of men. It cannot advance in true co-ordination and enrichment apart from ever deepening and consolidating personal life. This was the profound doctrine of Plato, enunciated in the course of his conflict with the theories of radical sophism and of his engagement with the social confusion of his own time. It is a doctrine of the utmost significance for Christian sociology, and no secular theory can do it justice; for it invites the conscious effort to connect the economic organisation indissolubly with the spiritual life.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever emasculated personality, robbed it of mystical depth, or placed in doubt its creative responsibility, was therefore bound to invalidate the corporate construction of society. Karl Adam proceeds to trace this process in the following manner. "After Kant and his school had made the transcendental subject the autonomous lawgiver of the objective world and even of the empirical consciousness itself, after man instead of holding to the objectivity of the living thing and of his own self began to speak of an objectivity which possessed none but a purely logical validity, and of a

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the author's *The Divine Society*, Chap. II, which is largely indebted to Dr. Ernest Barker's *Greek Political Theory—Plato and His Predecessors*.

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purely logical subject, then the whole consciousness of reality became afflicted with an unhealthy paralysis. . . . The autonomous man, cut off from God, and the solitary man cut off from the society of his fellow men, isolated from the community, is now severed from his own empirical self. He becomes merely a provisional creature, and thereby sterile and unfruitful, corroded by the spirit of 'criticism,' estranged from reality, a man of mere negation."<sup>3</sup>

Now, the Tractarians, in opposing to the secularism of their time the idea and fact of the Church, were occupying ground the strength whereof becomes more certain as the years pass. For it is precisely the Church that offers, in its very idea, the only alternative to the disillusion and dispersive confusion that have arisen from the modern failure. The Church is a visible phenomenon in the stream of history, and may be discussed, but not explained, merely as a phenomenal form. Its own account of itself, witnessed by scripture and supported by the massive testimony of its history, is that it is the visible embodiment of the divine purpose for man. It is not the product of men, even of Christian men. It is "a suprapersonal thing, which does not presuppose Christian personalities, but itself cre-

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 8, 9.

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ates and produces them." The Church's foundation is not the faith of Christians. It did not arise when the disciples of our Lord recognised Him as Messiah and Saviour. "The Church as a whole," says Dr. Karl Adam, "as a community, as an organic unity, is a divine creation. In the last resort she is nothing less than the unity of fallen humanity accomplished by the Sacred Humanity of Jesus, the Kosmos of men, mankind as a whole, the many as one."<sup>4</sup>

The Church, then, in the Catholic conception, is of the utmost significance for the valuation of man. It *is* man. It is the complex and corporation of all such as are being saved through the reintegration of mankind in Christ. In the Church, personality is reconstructed in and through the reconstruction of society. For the individual must discover his completed manhood only in and through the manhood of the race as redeemed in the basic Humanity of the Redeemer. In the Church the sociality of man is restored, and a new basis of civilised order is provided. The Church therefore is man lifted, by a divine intervention, to the true meaning of his existence. All men are potentially its members, for it is the true divine-human sodality which their essential humanity seeks.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 31, 32.

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The Church, therefore, regards itself as having been originated and authorised by supernatural power, and ordered to a supernatural end. Its projection in time and space must preserve within temporal and spatial conditions the assurance of its continuous identity as the society so originated, authorised and ordered; and it declares that in the apostolic succession of its ministry this pledge is given. Its membership must be differentiated from the world, and sustained in spiritual strength and corporate unity by means which express the supernatural as clothing itself in visible and socially apprehended means. And the Church so regards the operation of its Sacraments. It is the Body of Christ, the cohesion of shattered and dispersed humanity within the Divine Manhood, and it cannot be content to claim for itself less than final significance for the entire scope of human action in the world. It cannot admit as authoritative any ordering of life which bases upon other foundations than its own. It endures through the passing ages, through the rising and falling of kingdoms and cultures, sometimes ignored by the world, sometimes shamefully misrepresented and betrayed by its own adherents, but always and indefectibly presenting and proclaiming the grounds of its own existence in the Incarnation and the Sacraments: the witness and

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enunciation of a Kingdom not of this world which yet has laid its foundations in this world: a Kingdom of God which it declares to be the only true Kingdom of man.

We have found it necessary to insist more than once upon the elementary fact that the Oxford Movement originated in certain conditions, at a certain time and place, and that this particular fact clothes it with unmistakable meaning. It was, as we all know, an attempt to restore within the Anglican communion such a conception of the Church as that which I have just outlined. Its primary declaration was that the English Church was of Catholic continuity and that its doctrines were of Catholic essence. It is no part of my task to discuss here the ecclesiastical validity of the Tractarian and Anglo-Catholic position. My aim is to point out what are the implications of that position in certain important respects. The Tractarians and their successors have produced an argument supported by wide and profound learning; and the Revival which was inaugurated in Oxford has been fruitful in saintly devotion and missionary fervour. But I am concerned, not to show that the Anglo-Catholic interpretation of the Anglican formularies is true, but to point out what is involved in the supposition of its truth.



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The Tractarians themselves were diligent in their endeavours to prove that the Church of England was the Catholic Church in England, belonging by descent and by its basic profession to that one, supernaturally founded, endowed, and perpetuated body which claimed to be the extension of the Manhood of Christ. It is suggestive of the measure of their success that the Anglican assertion of a catholicity as historically genuine as that of the Roman or of the Holy Orthodox Church, has long ceased to seem to us paradoxical or absurd. It is indeed difficult for us, as we stand before the faded volumes of *Tracts for the Times*, to recall the high rumour of Oxford which these yellow leaves once carried abroad. But the tumult they provoked was no irrelevant commotion. Mighty issues were actually at stake, issues whereof the end has not yet appeared in the English Church and nation. For at that time the battle was joined in England, to determine whether the Church of the nation was primarily the Church of a spiritual foundation and authority, with an indelible divine commission which must change the orientation of all that human life which the Church could touch and teach. The conflict was not concerned with questions of merely academic reference. The passions of men were aroused because what was pro-

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pounded was a revolution more subversive of the whole accepted order of English life than any political changes could be.

The writers of the *Tracts* persisted at all events in the aim of exhibiting the English Church as arising from a Source beyond the political authority of the nation. The first tract was written by Newman, obviously with a vivid consciousness of a message that must be delivered at all costs. It immediately assumes that the Church is an institution not to be identified with its secular establishment. It announces the Catholic claim in its call to Churchmen to support the bishops as the successors of the apostles. It must have alarmed many of those prelates to find themselves and their cause so antithetically opposed by the writer to the accepted values of this world, that he "could not wish them a more blessed termination of their course than the spoiling of their goods and martyrdom." Canon Ollard's comment is just. "Imagination," he says, "boggles at such an end for the type of bishop then too common."<sup>5</sup> But in whatever uncomfortable situation their message might involve their Fathers in God, the Tractarians pressed on with its publication.

Thus, in Tract 49, an attempt is made to show that

<sup>5</sup> S. L. Ollard, *Short History of the Oxford Movement*, p. 42.

the Church is at once the successor of the ancient covenant, and the Kingdom of heaven. Its people are "the children of a long line of spiritual ancestry, the heirs, highly blessed and favoured indeed, of a rich and glorious inheritance."<sup>6</sup> And Tract 86, dealing with the actual political conditions and the "feebleness and state of servitude" of the English Church, describes the claim of Henry VIII, to the title, Head of the Church, as "preposterous,"<sup>7</sup> and invites its readers to regard the terms of the secular establishment as a divine visitation in punishment of the Church's shortcomings.<sup>8</sup> And further, such collections of doctrinal evidence as are provided in the *Catenæ Patrum* "in the later English Church"<sup>9</sup> were intended to prove the Catholic integrity of that Church, and to show that the deepest springs of its life were not to be looked for in the political structure of the British State, but in the mystical and sacramental resources of that visible, supra-national Body which had come into the world as the effect of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

I am placing emphasis upon the Tractarian intention

<sup>6</sup> Tract 49, *The Kingdom of Heaven*, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Tract 86, *Indications of a Superintending Providence in the Preservation of the Prayer Book and in the Changes Which it has Undergone*, Part III, p. 74.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 80.

<sup>9</sup> Tract 74, *Apostolical Succession*; Tract 76, *Baptismal Regeneration*; Tract 78, *Quod Semper*, etc.; Tract 81, *Eucharistic Sacrifice*.

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in this respect, for the definite reason that their pre-occupation with the doctrine of the Church, so far from insulating religion from the concerns of this world, actually involves one of the fundamental issues of Christian sociology. The assertion that there is in the world a visible structure of human fellowship based neither upon the laws of human society, nor upon natural ties of blood, nor upon the presumed necessities of economic organisation, but upon a supernatural reality, raises the immense problems of the re-ordering of the whole field of human relations in accordance with the principle of that divine fellowship, and of the relation between the social standards of the religious, and those of the secular, society. But before we approach those problems, we must recall the necessity of the Tractarian witness in England; and we must set up some claim for the validity of that witness, not indeed in respect of the catholicity of the English Church (for we have already excluded that subject from our purview), but upon the question as to whether that Church had, as a matter of historic fact, submitted itself to the final control and complete jurisdiction of the State, and had thus already forfeited the right to speak with an independent voice. A century ago the distinctive origins and autochthonous life of the Church were cer-

tainly in grave peril of being obliterated from the minds of Englishmen. The Church had no voice wherewith to express its will, and was therefore in danger of losing its corporate self-consciousness. The resistance of Convocations to the latitudinarian proposals for Prayer-Book revision advanced by the Royal Commission of 1689, and the later condemnation of Bishop Hoadley's opinions by the Lower House, in the notorious Bangorian controversy, had led to the suppression of Convocation by the Crown in 1717.<sup>10</sup> We shall presently see that this act was *ultra vires*, but our present point is that it assisted to produce assumptions concerning the nature of the English Church which, by 1833, had become so firmly established that those who questioned them were regarded as fantastic special pleaders.

In the eighteenth century, Bishop Warburton had produced an argument which, while assuming that Church and State were two societies, went on to conceive their relation in such a manner as practically reduced the Church to a soulless subservience to the aims of secular policy.<sup>11</sup> Warburton had held that the function of the State was to secure temporal well-being,

<sup>10</sup> Sparrow Simpson, *History of the Anglo-Catholic Revival from 1845*, p. 175, *et seq.*

<sup>11</sup> W. Warburton, *Essay on the Alliance Between Church and State*. Cf. A. W. Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians*.

and that of the Church to uphold man's relation with God. He regarded each as sovereign in its own sphere; but since the State alone possesses coercive powers, its alliance with the Church presupposes that the Church must use all its influence in the service of the State in return for the State's protection. In such a relation, they cannot both preserve independence, and therefore the Church, being physically weaker, surrenders its autonomy to the State. The State, declared Warburton, accepts the alliance, not for the sake of promulgating the Faith, but merely for the purpose of civil order, and would naturally establish that religious denomination which was numerically greatest. Such a theory must inevitably destroy the Church as a society providing principles of social order which differed from those of its secular environment, for it must paralyse the Church's moral judgment. And with the silencing of Convocation, and the general depression of spiritual life and Church consciousness, the theory of Warburton attained a vague but wide and settled acceptance which was at length challenged only amidst uproar and fierce dispute within the quiet halls of Oxford. The Tractarian witness concerning the Church was, then, of prime necessity for the recovery of any distinctive social consciousness within the Church.

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There remains, however, the question of whether this witness, however ideally consonant with a true understanding of the Church, was not futile in view of the assumed acceptance by the Church of England of such conditions of establishment as must denude her of all power of self-determination, to say nothing of spiritual leadership within the nation. It is, I suppose, a fact, that every word of moral protest or of spiritual guidance uttered in the name of the English Church, is still robbed of its full effect in some minds by the consideration that this Church is the creature of a secular order which it is presuming to direct. And although we have necessarily declined to enter upon a discussion of the merits of the Tractarians' arguments that the English Church is essentially and truly Catholic, we cannot ignore the question of their moral freedom to make such a claim. If the Church had in fact bound herself hand and foot to the State, so that from the State she must accept every interpretation of her formularies, and must not raise her voice upon any public issue without the State's bidding, then indeed the Oxford Movement must be futile until, perhaps at the price of great suffering and loss, the Church should have broken the bonds which tied her.

The point of the controversy is simply this. In up-

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holding the spiritual sovereignty of the Church, were the Tractarians recalling the Church to an ideal that the Church itself had sold; or were they demanding the exercise of a prerogative which was morally inalienable from the Church and had been stifled without its consent? For a learned and convincing account of the facts, I would refer to the relevant passages in Dr. Sparrow Simpson's *History of the Anglo-Catholic Revival*.<sup>12</sup> The central considerations are these—I quote Dr. Sparrow Simpson's words, dealing with the suppression of Convocation. "This subjection of Convocation," he says, "was based on a legal interpretation of the Act of Submission of the clergy in the reign of Henry VIII. The Act of Submission decreed that the clergy should not enact any Canons without the King's licence to make, promulge or execute such canons. The Judges informed the House of Lords that according to this Act, Convocation not only cannot assemble without the King's assent, but also when assembled cannot confer without leave of the King. Consequently, Convocation was always assembled by the King's direction, but never permitted to confer or deliberate on any affairs of the Church."<sup>13</sup> Thus, after the Bangorian contro-

<sup>12</sup> Specially Chaps. IX and X.

<sup>13</sup> Sparrow Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 176.



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versy, the "assembling" of Convocation was nothing more than a farcical form; and the position in which the Church was deprived of this organ of her self-consciousness was substantiated by a particular interpretation of a legal enactment under Henry VIII.

It was left for the struggles of the ritual controversies and persecutions to elucidate the fact that this interpretation was the work of Lord Chief Justice Coke, in the reign of James I, and that it was of very questionable validity.<sup>14</sup> It was recalled that in 1662 the House of Commons had accepted the Church's proposed changes in the Book of Common Prayer without examination, and that in 1689 Parliament had declined to deal with an ecclesiastical question, holding that Convocation was the proper assembly for its discussion. Gladstone declared that "at the Reformation the Papal Prerogatives were not carried over to the Crown"; and that whereas in the Canons we find the words, *we decree and ordain* (that is, we, the members of the two Houses of Convocation), we observe in the Acts of Parliament the words, *Be it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Com-*

<sup>14</sup> "This discovery is attributed to a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, the Rev. Edward Dodd, who instructed Bishop Wilberforce, and Henry Hoare, the munificent promoter of the Church House."—Sparrow Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

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*mons.* The argument is that in a Canon the King does not enact and never did. In an Act of Parliament the King is the "fountain and whole authority of the law."

I need not recite here the series of historical and political events which had diminished the actual power of the English Crown and had exalted the authority of Parliament. The contention is that amidst all the changes of history no legal enactment and no consent of the Church had ever given either to King or Parliament the right to enact the Church's laws. This view was supported not only by Gladstone, but by such eminent authorities as Wayland Joyce and Robert Phillimore. And Dean Church held that the power of the Crown was never more than that "visitatorial" power such as Christian princes had frequently exercised in the Church. The Prince himself was a member of the Church, and his visitatorial function was personally exercised. The rise of a secular authority distinct from and possibly alien or hostile to the Church, yet claiming real government over it, was undreamed of in the English Reformation.

Upon this basis, Pusey and Keble maintained that the spiritual sovereignty of the Church of England had never been forfeited.<sup>15</sup> Whether that claim be consid-

<sup>15</sup> Sparrow Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

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ered justified or not, the fact is that the last exercise of secular power in the attempt to control the expression of the Church's mind, in the notorious case of the Prayer Book Revision of 1928, provoked so great a reaction that it is unlikely that any such situation will ever again arise. It may be said that the English Church has now made up its mind as to its spiritual autonomy, and is now seeking the wisest implementation of the principle. At all events, it is less than ever conscious of any legal or moral onus to accept the official secular view in any question of national or international politics, or of economic organisation. Whether it is to be identified with the Catholic Church of history or not, it certainly shows strengthening signs of refusing to be subsumed by the secular State. It even shows signs of a consciousness of sovereignty. It considers that it has not only the right but the duty of pronouncing upon certain questions of public policy, as the representative Body of Christ in England, and in recent years has done so, in some signal instances. Not that it has fulfilled its vocation in this respect, or has performed half that is required of it; but it has claimed a significant right.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Miss Ruth Kenyon's pamphlet, *Does the Church Stand for a Living Wage?* in which a considerable body of evidence is given.

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But the more persistently the right is exercised and the duty fulfilled, the more surely will emerge the problem of the relation of the Church with the world. I have been attempting in the foregoing discussion of the Tractarian view of the Church, and the obstacles confronting the Oxford Reformers, to lead up to the real issue. That I take to be the question of the relation between a society claiming to obey and to exercise a supernatural authority, to constitute a divine norm within the earthly sphere, and the legal, social and economic standards of the world, seeing that these two orders of the sacred and the secular organisation of human life must take cognisance of, and exercise control over, the same fields of human conduct. If as Christian sociologists we depress our Church theory, we deprive the gospel of its most cogent social reference; we undermine all that social faith and purpose which rest upon the assurance that men have actually been knitted together in a heavenly communion. But I suppose it might still be left open to us to hope for the percolation of the principles of Christian ethics through the whole mass of human individuals, who would thus become the Kingdom of God. That is not my own conception of the Christian religion, and it was not the conception of the Oxford reformers. They

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believed that the essential divine-human relation of the heavenly Kingdom was already established on earth in the sacramental Church. But, throughout history, the problem of the Church's relation with the secular organisation has perpetually accompanied this Catholic claim, and we have seen that the Tractarians themselves were by no means unconscious of it.

Indeed, one of the main effects of their impact upon the religious life of England has been to force upon men's minds the disparity between the principles of the sacramental fellowship and the human relations sanctioned by the secular order. A generation after Keble had preached his Assize Sermon, Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury, sympathetic toward the Catholic Revival, showed in a notable charge to his clergy, that he was aware of the profundity of the issues at stake; but it cannot be said that he had much guidance to offer to the Church painfully recovering the consciousness of a divine commission. These are his words. "When I speak of the Church, I am speaking of the visible Kingdom of the Mediator; and when I speak of its authority I mean that it has the power and responsibility of defending the truth of God, and that this real since delegated and inalienable power is wholly spiritual, and owes nothing to any temporal source.

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But this Kingdom which is not of this world was to find its place in the midst of the Kingdoms of this world, and when placed in them, had to exercise its independent authority in juxtaposition to the august and equally independent authority of the State."<sup>17</sup>

Now, this is but the revival of the dualism of Dante's *De Monarchia*, a theory mediating between the theocracy of the Middle Ages and the insurgent secularism which was soon to establish itself. It did not succeed in explaining the basis of interaction between Church and State; and since some functions of the State must manifestly be subject to an ethical judgment, and the single act of a man may express his will either as a citizen or as a member of the Church, no outward circumscription of spheres can prevent a rivalry between the two authorities. Dr. Sparrow Simpson interprets Bishop Hamilton's words as meaning that nationalism is to be subordinate to Catholicism; and if the Church may limit the sovereignty of the State upon the field of international relations, it may logically limit the authority of the State within the national borders, for the Church is in either instance regarding itself as the supreme social cohesion. But Bishop Hamilton does not go beyond the assertion that the Church's

<sup>17</sup> Sparrow Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

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authority is independent of the State of which the authority is "august and equally independent." He leaves the two societies in a juxtaposition which enunciates, rather than solves, the problem.

That problem, which the Tractarians translated to a living and urgent issue, was to become more acute as the world advanced with decreasing reference to the Church's judgments, and as the restored idea of the Church produced in the Anglican conscience an ever more vivid conviction of the disparity between the Church and the world. There are now a thousand issues upon which the activities and assumptions of the secular order are in patent conflict with the very meaning of the Gospel and the Sacraments. The fundamental purpose of human existence is now differently conceived by the secular and the Christian mind. And there presses upon the Christian consciousness the need for a decision as to how far and in what sense one is to regard the secular authority as "independent," and as to the precise scope of the Church's spiritual sovereignty.

The original Tractarians looked longingly back to that association of Church and State which had existed in England in the Caroline period. We have remarked at an earlier stage of our study that they were, almost

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without exception, conservatives; but this statement conveys no information as to their real outlook, unless we remember that the political and social connotation of the English word "conservative" suffered strange transformations during the nineteenth century. The Tractarians, viewing with apprehension the increasing alienation of the State from the Church, and seeing that in the contemporary circumstances this involved the government of the Church by a power increasingly secular, turned to the latest moment of the past which afforded the spectacle of Church and State in friendly and understanding alliance. We must pause for a moment to consider what this involved, and to ask whether the standards of that particular and ephemeral phase of English history were the only appropriate political expression of the Tractarian principles.

The friendship and understanding between the Caroline Church and State were genuine enough, but they rested upon no consistent theory. It may seem, at first sight, that the doctrine of the divine right of Kings, so central in the whole Caroline position, seeing that it was professed by monarchs who were firm supporters of the Church, presupposed a mystical value in Kingship conveyed by the King's membership within the Divine Society. This assumes that the doctrine of "di-



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vine right" was but a development of the mediæval conception of the King as a servant of *Respublica Christiana*. But this assumption cannot be substantiated. The divine right of Kings was originally asserted, not in the interests of the Church, but rather against the Church and in the interests of purely secular government. It arose in the struggles of the Emperors against the Popes. It was the Emperor who was first held to rule by divine right, and the contention meant that his power was not dependent upon the will of the Pontiff. But when national monarchies became established as centres of authority, the Kings set up the theory that since some part of the imperial power had devolved upon them, they too must be held to govern by divine right. The religious terminology in which it was expressed must not obscure from our eyes the fact that this was a claim unbased in the will of that Divine Society which S. Thomas Aquinas had regarded as the true sanction of all government in Christendom.<sup>18</sup>

In later days, and in England, the doctrine was, of course, convenient for a monarch whose national Church had broken with the Papacy. But was it a view which the Church could accept, without running grave

<sup>18</sup> J. N. Figgis, *The Divine Right of Kings*, pp. 14, 43-53.

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risks? The English Church, reverting from the Papal to the more primitive conciliar theory of Catholicism, was faced with a new situation in its intimate juxtaposition to the national State, but we have seen that it did not surrender its spiritual independence in the actual settlement reached. And circumstances conspired to make the doctrine of the King's divine right appear as a defensive weapon of the Church. For James I insisted upon the doctrine, not so much as against the English Church,<sup>19</sup> but as against the menace of a Calvinistic Church-State in his realm of Scotland. It was thus, in Britain, in the early seventeenth century, still a theory devised in the secular interest, but now against Calvin and not directly against the Pope. But the Anglo-Catholics of the Caroline period were very much concerned to safeguard the Church from Presbyterianism. James I and Charles I were well-disposed toward the High Church position. What more natural, then, than that the High Churchmen should support the royal claim against their own enemies, clothe it with mystical significance, and assume that it involved an acknowledgment of the centrality of the Church in the body politic.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Though he would not have bishops interfering in matters of State and could be rude to them.

<sup>20</sup> J. N. Figgis, *op. cit.*, p. 130, *et seq.*

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Before the last of the Caroline Kings had passed, however, the mystical interpretation of the doctrine was already fading. Filmer defended it upon the argument that the royal right was divine only because it was natural,<sup>21</sup> a position which required no association of the King with the Church. The political interpretation held the field until it became evident that the effective power in England was not the King at all, but a group of Whig landlords; and the doctrine of the divine right of Kings thenceforth lingered only in the sacramental mysticism of the Non-jurors and the romanticism of the Jacobites. It had helped to establish the idea of a strong secular government, able to maintain itself without the assistance of any religious alliance or interpretation; and since with the Hanoverian succession the personal association of monarch and Church lost its traditional intimacy, the Caroline understanding between Church and State could be displaced by such theories as that of Warburton.

In turning toward the Caroline tradition, therefore, the Tractarians were recalling a situation in which, while the Church had certainly counted for much, and an independent, self-conscious secularism was not actually existent, the sub-structure of the whole edifice

<sup>21</sup> *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings* (1680).

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was unsafe. It was a fortuitous and passing circumstance that allowed a close intimacy and mutual understanding between Church and State in England on the basis of the doctrine of the divine right of Kings. But by the beginning of the nineteenth century that doctrine was dead, beyond restoration, and in its place stood the claim of any *de facto* government to a right based on grim force and necessity. That is to say, it was the same doctrine of secular power, having dispensed with the religious clothing no longer necessary, and no longer involving the idea of personal monarchy as essential. And unless we are to conclude that the Oxford Movement was inevitably bound up with an obsolete theory of the relation of Church and State, we must look for the true meaning of Tractarian doctrine in some other direction. For, as we have seen, the Caroline situation, stripped of certain glamorous non-essentials, was in reality the situation of two authorities in a juxtaposition which was not an organic reconciliation. But the fact to be considered is that the revival of Church doctrine did resuscitate the whole problem of the relation between the visible Society of Christ, and the organisation of the Kingdoms of this world.

The actual course of the Catholic Revival forced

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into prominence certain aspects of the problem, in the series of disputes concerning doctrine and ritual which from time to time the secular courts essayed to settle, provoking the more determined resolution of the Catholic party. But the preoccupation of this long controversy fastened attention upon the anomaly of an unqualified State's attempt to adjudicate in questions of religious belief and ceremonial, and somewhat obscured the larger philosophical question of the essential rivalry in the field of ethico-social authority which must arise when the self-conscious Catholic Church confronts the self-conscious modern State. But the more securely the Catholic position became established, the more certain was it that it must produce some alternative to the doctrine of an imperial, political Papacy upon the one hand, and to the natural right of an omnipotent and omnicompetent State upon the other. The relation between the Church's sovereignty and the secular order must be reconsidered.

This task was not entirely overlooked by the writers of the famous *Lux Mundi* Essays,<sup>22</sup> designed by a group of Oxford theologians to relate the Catholic Faith to the modern intellectual situation. Regarding the Incarnation as the central doctrine of Christianity, they

<sup>22</sup> First published in 1889.

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attempted, in the light of a fuller conception of its implications, both to restate some other Christian doctrines and to show that the Faith alone could provide a final meaning for the thought and life developing at that time.

Such a purpose must naturally lead to some review of the bearing of the Faith upon social problems, and ought to have produced a discussion of the main question of the relation of the standards of the two societies. But the essays do not clearly reveal a consciousness of the specific social implications of Catholicism; nor, indeed, can it be said that they offer any profound criticism of the basic principles of the secular economic structure. Dr. Illingworth, in his essay on the Incarnation, makes an observation which might be an introduction to Christian social doctrine: that Christianity is the only religion which does justice to the element of truth in materialism, while precluding its illegitimate perversions. That is to say, the Incarnation provides the guiding sanction for man's concern with this world. But in the same essay Dr. Illingworth offers a statement which surely is open to criticism. "Secular civilisation," he says, "has co-operated with Christianity to produce the modern world. But secular civilisation is, as we have seen, in the Christian view, nothing

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less than the providential correlation and counterpart of the Incarnation. For the Word did not desert the rest of his creation to become Incarnate."

We have here the issue which occupied us in our second chapter, when we discussed Mr. Binyon's statements concerning the alleged shortcomings of Latin theology and their effects upon the Oxford Movement. Dr. Illingworth, attempting to "humanise" the theology of the Incarnation, exhibits "secular civilisation" as the work of that Eternal Word, Whose Incarnation produced the Church. But to which "secular civilisation" does he refer? We may admit that the civilising impulse in man is divinely implanted. But if we believe in freedom and sin as realities, we are not required to consider any particular civilised order as necessarily expressing upon its own level the divine purpose, as that is expressed upon another level by the Incarnation. And to say, as Illingworth says, that "secular civilisation has co-operated with Christianity to produce the modern world" is to utter an ambiguity which is almost comic. For if one could subtract from the modern world as we now know it all those institutions, influences and ideals which have their roots in Christian teaching, it does not seem that what remained would be very likely to "co-operate with Christianity."

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Dr. Illingworth's position, on the face of it, would prevent the Christian consciousness of the Church from opposing the world, because the world-order is held to be the expression of the Word. But this is no true application of the doctrine of the cosmic Christ. It omits to consider the defacing effects of human sin with which the Incarnation was very much concerned. It does, indeed, pass beyond the mere juxtaposition of Church and State, and conceives a natural and inevitable co-operation between them; but it does not explain the terms of co-operation. It does not enunciate the ethico-social sovereignty of the Church as the Divine Society.<sup>23</sup>

The Catholic view is that the social nature of man is good, and belongs to humanity in its divinely intended integrity: but that the Church exists because that social nature has been distorted and thwarted by sin, so that the actual social "orders" of men have been largely social perversions. For those who share this view, the problem remains, how is the social meaning of the Church to be given effective expression within secular societies which neither desire the Church's sanction nor accept its authority? It was not satisfactorily answered by those Christian socialists who desired to pledge the

<sup>23</sup> This criticism of a not too well-considered opinion does not minimise the degree of my admiration for Dr. Illingworth's work in general.



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Church to the support of programmes and theories of secular provenance. The Catholic Revival meant that within the visible, historic Body of Christ, with its dogmas and sacraments, was to be found the true source of social redemption. Those movements within the Church of England during the latter half of the nineteenth century which assumed that it was the Church's duty to accept the Marxian alternative to capitalism, though they were sometimes of Catholic profession, were in reality departing from the fundamental conception of the sacramental Christian fellowship as the true social norm.

It was not until the period of the Great War that English Catholics began clearly to perceive that to involve the Church either in a defence of the secular order, or in the current secular attack upon it, was a betrayal of the Catholic idea of the Church. They then began to understand that either course implied a confession of despair, and that therefore there was upon them a tremendous onus to re-establish the basic principles of human association as desiderated by the doctrines of the Faith. I do not suggest that English Catholics as a whole are so awake to the issues; but in so far as Anglo-Catholicism is expressing social concern, this is the direction of its thought.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> This will be seen in the *Reports* of the Anglo-Catholic Summer School of Sociology.

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But the process begun in the decline of the Middle Ages, whereby the theories of John of Salisbury and S. Thomas Aquinas were supplanted by the secularism of Pierre du Bois and Marsilio of Padua, until at length appeared such portents as Machiavelli with his *Il Principe* and Hobbes with his *Leviathan*,<sup>25</sup> had now reached results which must make any attempt at the concentration of social reformation around the structure of the Church a problem of enormous difficulty. This process had been logically completed by Hegel, and it left the burdensome conception of an omnipotent State, the source of all social life, suffering no mediator between itself and the individual, and regarding itself as the only organic tie between men.

How could such a State allow the Church to claim sovereignty in any field engaging the real actions of men in this world? How could it brook either criticism or advice, while itself claiming to be the only social root, the sole ethical foundation? We are to remember that the doctrines of Marxian socialism assumed such a view of the State. And those who called themselves Christian Socialists with any philosophical grasp of the meaning of terms were bound to envisage the Church as a temporary or at least non-essential

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *The Divine Society*, pp. 73-95.

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instrument whereof the purpose was to shape the one true and basic cohesion of the State into the Christian exercise of its sole sovereignty.<sup>26</sup> This was a view more compatible with the Church philosophy of later, liberal nonconformity, than with the Catholic doctrine of the Church as society verily redeemed. But it was never explained how the omnipotent and omniscient State, springing not from the grace of God, but from the nature of things, was surely to be led in the Christian way by the ministrations of the Church. It was never certain that such a State could permit the existence of an organised body of opinion critically disposed toward it; it was never made clear that it could allow an opposition newspaper. And certainly neither the sovereign capitalist State, nor the sovereign Bolshevik State, nor the German Reich under Hitler, has admitted any need for Christian guidance.

If, however, the Catholic doctrine of the Church be accepted, and if at the same time all pietistic dualism and next-worldliness be disregarded, the Church must stand forth not merely as the temporary instrument, but as the very mode, of social redemption. This inevitably implies that the Church cannot accept the doc-

<sup>26</sup> G. C. Binyon, *The Christian Socialist Movement in England*, Chaps. II, III, V; M. B. Reckitt, *Faith and Society*, Chap. III.

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trine of the omnipotent State, without surrendering the "crown rights of Jesus Christ." It teaches the doctrine of the Fall, and it cannot accept "omnipotence" wielded by unredeemed forces. And in view of the whole present situation, it seems to me that one of the chief effects of the Oxford Movement was to impose upon the English Church the task of recovering for itself a real field of action in society. I would urge the consideration that the restoration of social initiative to the Church is one of the prime problems of a Christian sociology. The approach to this subject was opened by Fr. Figgis, who bluntly denied that the State "in the sense of an absolute superhuman unity"<sup>27</sup> had ever existed; and the Anglo-Catholic Summer School of Sociology has followed him, in its persistent adhesion to the view that it is the duty of the Church to seek to express its sovereignty by regaining its moral centrality in society. To this theme we must return.

But we must pause to consider the task as it is affected by the establishment of the Church of England, for there is a widespread opinion that a Church in any such relation with the political State has submitted to having her hands tied. Now, we have seen that this was not intended to be the effect of the post-reformation

<sup>27</sup> J. N. Figgis, *Churches in the Modern State*. Figgis based his conclusions largely on Gierke and Maitland.

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settlement in England. The notion of a State so far apart from the Church that it could be regarded as an alien master, at a time when, in spite of the increasing claims of secular government to be delivered from ecclesiastical oversight, men still thought of the community as a single body, had not taken anything like clear shape. The Oxford reformers, however, had to deal with a situation from which the original bases had disappeared, and had been succeeded by an entirely new set of presuppositions. Therefore, I am very ready to admit that as between the Church and the modern State in England, the time is ripe for a searching revision of the terms of establishment as they have come to be interpreted.

Yet mere political disestablishment would constitute no very significant gesture, so long as the Christian community is involved with an economic society whose principles are in opposition to the dogmas of the Church. This is a consideration which our English nonconformists are apt to overlook. And Mr. Maurice Reckitt has pointed out that the control of financial power over the Church in the interests of the established economic system is a phenomenon not unknown in your own blessed land of freedom,<sup>28</sup> where all Chris-

<sup>28</sup> M. B. Reckitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-2.

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tian denominations shine with the virgin purity of complete dissociation from the political structure of the State.

It is a consideration which discloses further vistas in the problem we are attempting to elucidate. It may be an embarrassing and humiliating position for a Church to be established by a State which practically ignores its significance; but it is no genuine escape from that situation, to be delivered only from the "State," while submitting to the requirements of an economic order which equally ignores the main principles of the Christian religion. And what, after all, if the political establishment prove to be the forlorn relic of a nobler ideal than now remains on the earth? What if the true interpretation be that the State was to be guaranteed by the Church, not as the monstrous and solitary mode of human association, but as a necessary organ of the society of which the Church was the true centre? What if the living idea in establishment is that the State is neither omnipotent nor omnicompetent, but has its rights, wide and searching as they may be, only that it may perform certain honourable but circumscribed functions?

To such a conception of the State some distinguished modern thinkers have returned. Thus Professor Mac

Iver thinks that "the State serves best when it provides the liberty and order on which other associations can build, and by which they seek more intimate or more particular ends."<sup>29</sup> For Professor Unwin the State is but "one of our social cohesions," though it is the one which has "drawn to itself the exercise of final authority and can support that authority if need be with the sanction of physical force."<sup>30</sup> Dr. Temple, Archbishop of York, fully agreeing with the delimitation of the State to a functional position within the larger reality of the community, regards it as disastrous to differentiate the State from other "social cohesions" by its use of force.<sup>31</sup> And although the modern State has actually presumed much upon this differentiation, I think Dr. Temple is right. For if the State is properly an organ of society, its use of force is tacitly condoned by that whole assemblage of social cohesions which constitute society. The force employed by the State is then capable of a direction, a mollification or a repression guided by a living social will. But if the State is permanently differentiated by some natural and inherent right to use force, all other social cohesions are for ever at its mercy.

<sup>29</sup> R. M. MacIver, *The Modern State*, p. 20.

<sup>30</sup> George Unwin, *Studies in Economic History*, p. 459.

<sup>31</sup> W. Temple, *Christianity and the State*, p. 110, *et seq.*

The recognition of the reality of other human associations<sup>32</sup> than that of the State, possessing claims which the State does not and cannot create, may seem at first sight a small matter. In truth it is one of vast importance, and specially for a Christian sociology. For it allows us to question the assumption that human activities exist for the State, and opens the way for the argument that the political organisation exists for the sake of personality and society which are more richly expressed in other forms of association or cohesion. Catholics, therefore, who believe that in the fellowship of the Church personality and society are raised to their highest terms, are free to welcome the vision of a society characterised by the divine cohesion of the Church, strengthened in every part by its consolidating influence, and employing the State for Christian ends.

So long as the Church is prepared to accept either the secular State or the economic organisation<sup>33</sup> as constituting the central and dominant human cohesion, it must be perpetually confronted with the alternative dangers of either fading out in a "progressive" and "successful" worldliness, or being overwhelmed in the ruin

<sup>32</sup> Strictly speaking, the State is not an "association" in the ordinary sense of the word, but I apply the term here merely to avoid circumlocution.

<sup>33</sup> The State and the economic organisation exhibit to-day an increasing tendency to become identified largely owing to structure of the financial system.



of a collapsing edifice. But if it insists that the State is rightly no more than the organ of society, it must still perceive that its own political establishment, if it be "established," is but the expression of its *social* establishment: that whether it is established or not in the ordinary sense, it is involved with the social order. And it can hold no actual sovereignty unless it can show either that its dogmas and ends characterise and direct that social order, or that it is indisputably disentangling its purpose from that of the secular environment. Since it cannot be held that its dogmas and ends are in fact characterising and directing the present social order, we reach the conclusion that the Oxford Movement, by its very insistence upon the divinity and spiritual independence of the Church, carried the implication that somehow the Church must differentiate itself from the secular order upon the fields of common human action, and that there must be a sustained and prophetic criticism of that order by the Divine Society in respect of the "ends" for which the human order is organised and their effects upon the soul of man.

We have here reached a tremendous social implication of the Catholic Revival. I think it is not claiming too much to say that, bearing in mind the social ser-

vices of the Broad Churchmen, the Evangelicals, and the Nonconformists, it yet is to the resurgence of the doctrine of the divinely founded, visible and continuous fellowship of the Incarnation that we must attribute the profounder elements in the modern Christian social consciousness, and specially the element of conviction that the Faith implies a supernatural social cohesion which is at once an onus upon the Church and a challenge to the world.

We conceive, then, that the full explication of the Catholic Revival desiderates a return from the theory of the omnipotent and omniscient State, and the substitution of the idea of the State as the effective organ, for certain purposes, of human society. This does not mean that, so understood, the State is without authority and very strong sanctions in the true order of human life. It means rather, as Dr. Temple has said, that while the actual social need of the State may be regarded as indicating the State's divine origin and right, yet "the first effect of connecting our political thought with our faith in God is to destroy the ultimate and absolute character which has often been attributed to the State."<sup>34</sup> The character and purposes of the State will thus be determined by the character

<sup>34</sup> W. Temple, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

of the Society of which it is a particular organ. And since that society consists of a number of cohesions, of which the Church is one, it leaves open the possibility that the Church may achieve leadership and a characterising influence in society, and that its values, principles and inspiration may eventually govern the operations of the State.

This, however, is merely the initial step in our contemplation of a stupendous problem. The Christian Society is not set aside only by the political organisation of the modern State. It is ignored very largely by modern society. There is a wide abyss between its dogmas and the assumptions upon which the world lives. But Catholic Christians cannot be satisfied with liberty to remain as "a perfectionist and quietist *enclave* in a society to whose fate it is indifferent."<sup>35</sup> The whole weight of Catholic dogma, the whole pressure of Catholic church-consciousness, demands the ceaseless purpose of subsuming "society" in the Kingdom of God. "We are bound to claim," says Mr. Reckitt, "not merely that the Christian citizen shall continue to act as a Christian while he is functioning as a citizen, but that the Christian community should continue to make the whole community of which it is—or at least aspires to be-

<sup>35</sup> M. B. Reckitt, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

come—the conscience, face up to and embrace the consequences of such moral and economic truth as it is capable of recognising.”

Now, the gravely pertinent consideration is how this office is to be discharged in the contemporary conditions. Dr. Gore looked back almost wistfully to the days when the primitive Church could maintain a clear line of differentiation in every field of life, between itself and the environment of the pagan Empire,<sup>86</sup> so that not only was it marked off from paganism by its theology, worship and private morals, but actually, for some time, maintained its adherents in a distinctive economic association. But it must be remarked that certain definite but impermanent conditions aided this clear, objective division of the Church from the world. There was the certainty that the world was consciously and deliberately hostile, not merely to the Church's opinions, but to its existence. There was, too, the lingering expectation of a not distant *Parousia*, so that the situation could be regarded as an interim. The main purpose of the Church in the world, for the moment, was to preserve its own being, amidst gigantic and inimical forces which it could have no hope of subduing. Thus the Church, on occasions, could be-

<sup>86</sup> Charles Gore, *Christ and Society*, Chap. III (Halley Stewart Lectures).

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take itself to the catacombs without the least sense of deserting its post.

But the very universality of the scope of the gospel, the very humanism implicit in the dogmas of Incarnation and Redemption, must eventually bring the Church upon the open stage of the world's affairs. There was a profound validity in the Mediæval attitude. Sovereignty is in the very soul of the Church. And since the modern world ignores this, the question we have to answer is whether an isolation of the Church from the world, involving Christians in the attempt to erect an insulated political and economic order of their own, is the true method of realising the Church's sovereignty to-day. If we set aside, for a while, the large question of its possibility, and admit also that it might express not the aims of mere exclusiveness, but a considered purpose of winning the world by the force of a miraculous example, the question still abides, Is this the only and indeed the true method?

Such an insulation of a community could be secured only at the price of ignoring all the implications of that universal human solidarity discovered in the modern world-movement. And by calling Christians out of the natural social structure, the Church would easily suggest that national and racial orders and cultures

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were irredeemable. Moreover, the notion of a Christian community complete in itself and consciously presenting itself to the world as a model, seems fraught with subtle spiritual dangers for the Church itself. The Catholic Church does not pretend to be the Church of the perfect, and it seems therefore to follow that it can reach a Christian economic only so far as it can win acceptance for Christian standards amongst mankind generally.

The example of the primitive Church is scarcely to the point, when we remember the wide difference in the practical and psychological situations then and now. It is true that we stand in the midst of a monstrous world-order which owns no definite allegiance to Christ; but so far the modern world has made no active attempt to destroy the Church.<sup>37</sup> In spite of itself, this world bears some marks which would not be there but for the age-long presence of the Church; and not even modern vulgarism and "mass-mindedness" can wipe out the influence of two thousand years. But the effort to isolate the Church might have the effect of leaving those Christian influences without contact with their source and quickly withering away. It might well leave the Church with far less power over the masses

<sup>37</sup> How far this remains true in Russia is still a disputed subject.

of men than it possesses at present. And, at all events, there is nothing in the example and general attitude of our Lord to warrant such an enterprise as a normal expression of His Church's life. Nor should the threatened dissolution of our present secular organisation dictate such a policy, but rather reveal to the Divine Society an almost incredible opportunity. And, indeed, amidst all the grave consideration of Christian thinkers in view of the widening distance between the vision of the Church and the aims of the world, the proposal for such a *hejira* of the Church from the world has not been widely recommended. Peter Wust, for example, as fully conscious of the conflict as any contemporary writer, definitely opposes what he calls the policy of a "retreat to the catacombs."<sup>88</sup>

The policy is, indeed, impossible. And I have discussed it only because I desire to emphasise the conditions upon which alone the Church may honourably accept the remaining alternative. If the sovereignty of the Church may no longer be found to reside in its establishment by a political State, however well-disposed; or in its acceptance by any social order excepting upon the admission of the Church's social centrality, and may not be sought in an isolation from all secular

<sup>88</sup> P. Wust, *Crisis in the West*.

contacts, it can be expressed and realised only through the apparent paradox of a supernatural society urging claims and principles contrary to the practices of the world in which it is nevertheless involved. But the acceptance of that position must be clearly distinguished from the proposal for a settled and permanent compromise. It is not a return upon such dualism as we have already refused. The Church's people are to continue to do business in New York and London, because the world's life, the actuality of New York and London, is claimed by Christ.

This must necessitate an alert and constant application of the Christian morality in so far as that is possible under present circumstances. That it is not fully possible, that only a glozing obscurantism can make it seem possible, within the present social and economic scheme, is the radical assumption of my whole thesis. But what is practicable and what is desirable is that a developed social ethic applying the Christian dogmatic standards shall awaken the mind of the Church to a sense of intolerable contradiction. This may involve many individual deeds of heroism. It will certainly outmode the smug complacency which in some quarters passes for faith. But the Church cannot, even through martyrdom, transform, by some dramatic *coup*,



the purposes and modes of modern politics and industry. Yet it can make it clear and certain in men's minds that it nevertheless intends to effect a transformation, and that the entire pressure of its influence is toward that end. It can, if it will, create in the mind of the world the conviction that the existence of the Church is an increasing menace to the ills that now afflict mankind. If we neither retreat to the catacombs, nor accept the terms of Constantine, we are not therefore compelled to relapse upon the Laodicean alternative.

We have before us an unexampled opportunity, not merely in the failure of the secular system and the exhaustion of the secular attempts to solve the riddle, but in the possibility of demonstrating the spiritual root of the world's trouble in its misdirected choice of ends. But this has to be presented, not in the form of vague, pietistic moralising, but with intelligently conceived and constructive principles. Its economic and sociological meaning has to be set forth. The Church must possess not only a social conscience, but a sociological intelligence, so that its criticism of the passing order, or of any proposed substitute, may be fundamental and realistic, and also that its own alternative may be valid. The study of Christian sociology ought to be a definite

pursuit of every Christian theological seminary; and in every confirmation class it ought at least to be made plain that the Church, by its very existence, desiderates a renewed society.

It is not true that the Church is bound to leave to experts the decision as to whether the Faith is economically applicable, when there is no guarantee that the experts believe the Faith in any sense. It must now follow the advice of W. G. Ward, given when he was still in the ranks of the Tractarians, and build up its own broad views of what redeemed human society ought to be. Its evangelisation of the soul and of the social relation must be accepted as inseparable. If it is to exercise a sovereignty in this world, and in its own right as the Society of Christ, it must be by showing that it is conscious of what its sovereignty implies, and that it knows what it would make of the world.

Such a declared consciousness of differentiation from the aims of capitalist industrialism upon the one hand and of materialistic communism upon the other, would in itself serve to intensify and rally the Christian moral conviction. Much of the paltering with social issues of which preachers and teachers are now guilty is due to a lack of any clear vision of a Christian social aim. But as there rises within the Church a more sharply

defined outline of the social and economic implications of the Faith, and of the sacramental Christian society, the challenge to every Christian conscience will become more stringent and searching, and the methods of ecclesiastical obscurantism for some immediate advantage will seem more despicable.

All this I have said, upon the understanding that we are discussing the feasibility of some palpable sovereignty, in this world, of a supernatural society. We have been attempting to elucidate, in certain aspects, the significance of the Tractarians' return to Church-doctrine, amidst the secular welter of their day. I have denied that the true deduction is a false dualism of sacred and secular, of two worlds which never meet and are irrelevant each for the other. But if there is a false dualism, there is also a false monism<sup>39</sup>—the reduction of that excellent mystery, the Church, to the level of a mere instrument for the amelioration of man's material condition. From time to time this has been the bane of the Christian social movement both in England and in America. No amount of good intention can ever save it from being a disastrous surrender. Instead of the sublimation of the world-order within a supernatural cohesion, it offers us the secu-

<sup>39</sup> M. B. Reckitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-7.

larisation of the Divine Society itself. And to no purpose, for there can be no social salvation arising from secular roots.

A Catholic sociology must be the fruit of a perpetual consciousness of two worlds. It must be based upon the sacramental principle whereby the visible is brought into an expressive relation with the invisible. The sovereignty of the Church is indeed intended to be realised in factual leadership, in the imprinting of its characteristics upon the whole of society, in the guidance of the State for divine ends, in the true co-ordination of international relations. But only because the Church is the Bride of One whose Kingdom is not of this world: only because it is the Kingdom of the Lamb upon the throne, of Him who was dead, and behold, He is alive for evermore.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SACRAMENTAL SANCTIONS

The elucidation of the social significance of the Catholic doctrine of the Church involves, as we have seen, a criticism of the tendency to identify society and the State. It appears that the social conclusions of the Tractarian teaching must require either the political and economic isolation of the Church as a supernatural society accepting motives and sanctions other than those accepted by the world, or the recognition of the liberty of real social entities in such manner as would allow of the Church so influencing the character of society as a whole, as to secure a Christian purpose behind the State. The latter would then no longer be regarded as the supreme and all-inclusive social reality, but as an instrument for the realisation of designs originating beyond its sphere of action. We have now to make some suggestions as to the social aims which may be regarded as native to the Catholic Faith, and I will argue that these are most readily and properly discovered by an appreciation of what I will call the sacramental sanctions.

It is only just that we should recall at this point the

criticism offered by Professor Webb, to the effect that the Tractarian sacramental teaching was itself vitiated by that kind of religiosity which fails to perceive that sacraments can be "satisfactorily discriminated from magical rites" only by a sufficient emphasis upon the "social character of the bestowal of grace," which he regards as the ethical guarantee of the sacramental operation.<sup>1</sup> I wish to make it plain that I have no quarrel with Professor Webb upon the score of the importance of the social meaning of the Sacraments. That meaning is truly inseparable from any adequate sacramental doctrine. And if I mention his criticism, it is not merely in order to attempt to rescue the reputations of the Tractarians. I am rather more concerned about the possibility that some will assume the Tractarian religion as interpreted by Professor Webb to be of the true Catholic type, and will conclude that the "social meaning" of the sacraments may be safely neglected. Such pietism, translating the very corporate acts of the Church into an irrelevant subjectivism, and employing the Catholic religion as a weapon of defence in the interests of social privilege, has not been unknown in the records of Anglo-Catholicism. It is well, therefore, to recall certain facts.

<sup>1</sup> C. C. J. Webb, *Religious Thought in the Oxford Movement*, p. 100.

The Tractarian theologians did not, indeed, display an indisputable awareness of the immediate social inferences that rightly belong to the Christian sacramental acts. That is to say, they did not perceive the precise and stringent criticism of the contemporary social order carried by the sacraments themselves. They did not base their attacks upon current social tendencies on specifically sacramental grounds. But this is not to conclude that they were without perception of the "social character of the bestowal of grace." For surely their whole emphasis upon the importance of the Church implies that they regarded the bestowal of grace as operating through a particular social corporation. Their doctrine of the Church led them into pronounced antagonism to the fundamental political assumption of their day. And if they arrived at no very clear conclusions as to the bearings of sacramental theology upon the economic structure, they at least perceived that there were discrepancies between that structure and such a society as the Church could bless. They thus provided not only the germinal beginnings of a Catholic Sociology in the English Church, but inevitably invited a further and fuller exploration of the grounds and outline of that sociology. They certainly regarded the Church as a heavenly society, hav-

ing its own rights and its own programme within human history; and fidelity to their aims must involve us in an ever intensifying concern with the defence of those rights and the explication of that programme. And such a course necessitates an examination of the Catholic sacramental philosophy, for it is there we shall find the specific sanctions of the Christian approach to the world order.

It is upon its sacramental doctrine that Catholicism must expect to be judged by philosophy. For that doctrine implies the perpetuation of the Incarnational Principle, and therefore offers a broader ground for judgment than is provided by the assertion that the Word was once made flesh. Now, the doctrine of Incarnation constitutes the secure differentiation of Christian theism from deism, with its modifications in dualism and pluralism upon the one hand, and from all systems, whether of pantheism or of absolute idealism, which identify God and the Universe, upon the other. But the claim that the Incarnation actually and necessarily issued in the sacramental society imparts to the Incarnation itself a significance which is far more than "religious" in the special sense. It is the assertion that the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in this world was the beginning of a new cosmic co-ordination of which



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man, cohering in the redeemed social relation, is intended to be the instrument.

I think it will not be disputed that the sacramental system finds its central and supreme exemplification in the Sacrament of the Altar. Nor can it be denied that the Oxford Movement effected an amazing development of religious life in conscious relation with sacramental teaching and practice, or that later Catholic social thought has instinctively sought its most profound sanctions in this source. We proceed, therefore, to examine the sacramental principle as it is set forth in the Holy Eucharist, in order to discover to what kind of social ethos, to what principles of human cohesion, those are committed who proclaim their communion in the Body and Blood of Christ.

It remains true, as Edward Caird held more than a generation ago, that the irreducible data of philosophical inquiry are three. Descartes, notwithstanding that his influence served to mislead modern philosophy, at least left the self as a datum, though developments originating in him were subsequently to raise such doubts as threatened all knowledge. The entire Western philosophical tradition, apart from some small schools of radical scepticism, had accepted the not-self as another datum. And again, philosophy was bound

to assume that self and not-self were somehow related with a third term underlying them both and determining their relation to each other. Without straining for philosophical precision, we may take it that self, not-self, and an Ultimate Reality variously conceived, whether as transcendent, or as entirely immanent in self and not-self, or as somehow both transcendent and immanent, are the three main data of philosophical inquiry.

But since not only common sense, but philosophy itself, is driven to the supposition that consciousness belongs to many selves who agree in reporting that they are confronted by a common objectivity, an objectivity which turns out to be analysable and classifiable in the categories of scientific law, we assume that there is a common not-self, objective to the whole human race. I can join with a man in admiring a mountain: I cannot join with a mountain in admiring a man. Thus all philosophy which regards consciousness, however personal, as somehow also corporate in man, will conclude that we may speak of a common not-self, meaning the world of nature. We may therefore consider Reality under the terms of Man, Nature, and that Ultimate which Christian theology will not allow to be equated with man or the universe, or iden-

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tified with any other principle than that of the Being of God, the Creator of all and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, without entering upon a discussion of the nature of the change effected in the consecration of the Eucharistic species, we may observe that upon any view which can be called Catholic at all, in the Sacrament of the Altar we are dealing intentionally with these three data. For Christ, who instituted the Sacrament and with whom we there claim to have communion, is believed to be very God of very God, the Eternal Word actuating the existence of both self and not-self. The communicants are present in their two-fold capacity of personal existence and membership in the corporate structure which provides the social consciousness in this experience. And bread and wine are fragments, deliberately isolated, of that common objectivity, the not-self, with which the human consciousness is confronted. It is the Catholic belief that in the Blessed Sacrament both self and not-self attain a uniquely significant relation with Ultimate Reality. But what I am concerned to show is that the relation there consummated cannot be entirely severed from all reference to the intercourse of man with his material environment beyond the circumference of the religious

occasion. If the Christian religion is rightly declared to propound certain principles of human behaviour in the world, and if the Blessed Sacrament be integral to the Christian religion, then the Sacrament itself must afford grounds for the Christian approach to the world. But what is to be said, in this respect, of that consummation of self and not-self in the sacramental act which is so vital an element of Catholic teaching?

Let us begin by recalling that conflict between Naturalism and Idealism which so deeply engaged the thinkers of the last generation. Upon the one hand was the Idealist doctrine that consciousness was fundamental in the Universe, and that the human mind, whether as a mode of the Absolute or as partaking of the nature of the Absolute consciousness in some limited measure, played a creative part in constructing the world of our discourse. Upon the other hand, Naturalism declared that man was the product, and perhaps an insignificant product, of natural forces: that his mental powers had been developed in relation to an environment independent of him and long pre-existent; and that the final explanation of mind was nothing more than biological necessity which probably meant mechanical necessity. It is not our present purpose to criticise either of these views. We merely notice that

Idealism tended to find the explanation of the not-self in consciousness, while Naturalism sought to find the explanation of consciousness in the not-self: in nature, its laws and forces.

The solution of this problem toward which subsequent philosophy appears to move is in the conception of human consciousness and the physical world as organically related; but man, while deriving in some sense through nature, has nevertheless the task of providing nature with its full significance. In his science and philosophy, in his industry and art, in his ethics and politics, he brings out the meaning of the world of which, in one sense, he is part. But he is able to do this only because in him the higher levels of activity are exerted with directive force upon the lower states and stages of existence which now become the instruments of his purpose. The tremendous question is, however, from what source the human purpose is gained. What provides it with sanction and value?

The view of the universe as developing by the emergence of new levels of existence and value,—matter, life, mind, spirit,—is one which is now common enough. Dr. Temple, Archbishop of York,<sup>2</sup> and Fr. Lionel Thornton<sup>3</sup> have employed it in different ways

<sup>2</sup> *Christus Veritas*.

<sup>3</sup> *The Incarnate Lord*.

to expound the thesis of the essentially sacramental nature of that complex and manifold which we call the Universe. But the same accepted facts of emergent levels of attainment have suggested to some contemporary philosophers a very different conception.<sup>4</sup> Whereas the Christian thinkers see in the control of the lower levels by the higher the creative method of God, Professor Alexander beholds in the successive stages of existence the explication of a space-time continuum, of which God is to be the ultimate result. And he calls upon us to find satisfaction in the idea of a God whom we are to create.

But since a characteristic feature of each successive stage of existence is, as Dr. Temple points out, that it could not have been inferred or predicted, by our minds, from the preceding stage, we cannot comfort ourselves with any certainty as to the nature of the God who is to spring into existence as the result of our activity. And thus we cannot conceive the ultimate significance with which emergent deity will clothe ourselves and the Universe. Indeed, the question rather remains open, whether the nature of God and of every other stage of emerging reality is not wholly determined by, and contained in, the space-time continuum.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Professor S. Alexander, *Space, Time, and Deity*.

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This would be an inverted sacramentalism in which the significance of the more explicit was provided by the less explicit. And though we call the final emergence by the name of God, the fact remains that the whole intrinsic significance of God and the Universe is given in the primary reality out of which they emerge. For, with the greatest respect to Professor Alexander who taught me something of metaphysics long ago, the notion that a given reality, by its own nature, produces reality transcending its own level and surpassing its own scope is one which ordinary human sanity has only to understand in order to reject.

Christian thought sees in the emergence of new levels of creation a sacramental meaning, because it believes that each successive level springs, not from its predecessor, but ultimately from God as the acting and sustaining Cause. And thus to man is given the task of interpreting the whole process, because he is capable of co-operation and fellowship with the Eternal, Self-Existent Being who creates and orders all. This conception seems to require the immanence of a transcendent God. For if the world is a process, we cannot rest in a process as the final reality, and this leads us to the idea of transcendence. And on the other hand, if self and not-self are organically related, that

which sustains them both must be distinct from either, and yet the ground of their relation: thus we reach the idea of immanence.

Now, the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity means that the creative origin of the sacramental universe is personal and social. This doctrine, indeed, is a postulate necessary for belief in divine freedom; for real action can belong to the nature of Infinite Being, only if that Being include the principle of relation. An undifferentiated Unity could not create, because it would have to discover the principle of relation beyond itself, and therefore could not be infinite. A God who is Holy Trinity can act, can create. And it seems fitting that when His creation has reached the stage of conscious spiritual life, it should be found in the personal-social mode, because the personal-social principle is of God's very nature. And if real activity, the activity of spiritual freedom, be characteristic of God, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that in some limited measure it will characterise the personal-social life of man. Its finite mode, however, may conceivably explain its need for a common objective medium. The world becomes finally sacramental as the means of man's spiritual life which is of the personal-social character belonging to the Infinite Reality of God's Being. Thus



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to man is given the task of clothing the world with meaning, as he employs it in the realisation of the meaning of his own existence. His approach to the world must be controlled by the supreme spiritual end which is nothing other than the communion of persons in a divine-human fellowship.

The human contact with the physical Universe must serve not only to secure the communion and co-operation of man with man, but also to provide a mode of man's communion with God without which, indeed, the human society cannot endure. But it is in and through the human fellowship that man may realise his divine likeness; and, moreover, if he is inherently social, he must commune as a social being with God. And if the material world supplies the outward bond and nexus of his society, the means and opportunity of fellowship, he cannot omit or escape from this in his approach to God. Indeed, it is only thus that the world is uplifted to its full potential meaning and becomes the efficient instrument of the creative Word.

That, in the Christian view, is the true end of man's activity within the visible world; but it is an end which has never been achieved. Man has not wrought out the significance of nature and of his own life. His sin is thus seen as a distortion of the creative process. The

misdirection of his will has misapplied the material instrument and has obscured its meaning; and the vast concatenation of evil purpose perverts the whole human employment of the world, whether as gigantic war or fierce lust, or as a secret thought that stirs no more than a few cells in a human brain. Our moral decisions are registered in the material environment, whereof the misuse creates further problems for our moral choice.

It follows that a religion of Incarnation and Redemption cannot in reality have reference only to individuals as such. It must be a redemption of man's social life, and it must therefore exhibit the restoration of the necessary objective medium of that social life to its divinely purposed instrumentality. And the supreme consummation of this redemptive intention is to be found in the declaration of our Blessed Lord, This is my Body: This is my Blood. I do not offer this line of thought as an adequate presentation of Eucharistic theology, but only as a relevant and deeply important aspect thereof. And we have now to consider in this light the bearings of the Catholic sacramental doctrine in the sociological field. For if the Catholic Revival is the reassertion of a divinely initiated human cohesion, it follows that the social practice inspired by

the Faith must be directed by the Sacramental thought which belongs to the Faith's very heart.

We shall first seek to discover the Christian estimate of material things, as that is guided by sacramental conceptions, and to elucidate the sociological valuations implied by that estimate. In other words, we are to speak of the economic implications of sacramental belief. Let us remember that we have seen in the Blessed Sacrament itself a restoration of the material instrument from a false to a divinely appointed end. This view apparently commits us to the assumption that the Catholic Faith approves man's acceptance of the world for use; and there seems to be no Catholic principle that can be invoked to forbid the exploitation of nature, and the employment of the human mind upon practical means for that purpose, so long as the process remains instrumental for the spiritual end. There is nothing more intrinsically spiritual in the use of a flint hammer than in the operation of an electrical machine plant. But we have to face the fact that the Catholic religious instinct has sustained in monasticism and asceticism an abstention from the world that sometimes bears the appearance of a rejection of the world. Is there, then, a contradiction between the sacramentalism and the asceticism of the Church?

They are consonant only when asceticism is a frugality practised for the sake of the community in circumstances of material scarcity; or when it is regarded in the light of a discipline or witness made necessary by the perpetual human tendency to accept the world, not as a sacramental means, but as an idolatrous end. The rejection of the world, if it is meant to express a final attitude and a whole philosophy, is not Christian. The true ascetic principle may demand of certain persons, in certain circumstances, the abstentions that are called poverty and chastity. It may demand of some the abstention that is called tee-totalism. But these very abstentions, in the main Catholic tradition, imply that there may be a right acceptance of possessions, of sex, or of wine. The fear of "goods" as in themselves a snare of the soul, the fear of woman as essentially a perverting influence in the spiritual life, the fear of wine as necessarily a destroyer, have appeared amongst professing Christians; but they are sub-Christian.

We conclude, therefore, that if the Church permits or even encourages ascetic practice, it is in order that men may learn the sacramental acceptance of the world. We cannot admit the atomism which would allow that some may work out their destiny by methods which have no relation whatever to the service of

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the corporate life of humanity; and we would therefore relate asceticism to acceptance, as the teacher of an acceptance that is sacramental. For we are committed to the view that the spiritual significance of man is to be realised in his constructive treatment of this world; not in any flight from it, or in any desertion from the social battle.<sup>5</sup>

At all events, we have to remember that asceticism is of spiritual worth only when it is voluntarily accepted. Christian thought can never admit any value in the enforced deprivation of men of the normal satisfactions of life. He who was called a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber eventually accepted the stringent asceticism of the Cross; but the very fact that He was the Word made Flesh is the sanction of His own acceptance of the world and of ours. The sacramental end subsumes the ascetic methods, but the object of the Faith is to rule our acceptance of the world by the laws of an eternal Kingdom.

We proceed therefore upon the assumption that a Christian sociology is possible because the Faith requires of men the use of the world. It is thus that the normal expression of personality and society is to be

<sup>5</sup> The Thomist Social Philosophy regarded asceticism as functional in this sense. Troeltsch in his *Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* appears to regard as "pure" asceticism that which we should regard as Manichæan.

achieved. And it follows that the Church is bound by its own first principles to rebuke any social or economic system which deprives large numbers of men of the material means of a sacramental self-expression. Such a system debars men from attempting the task which normally gives significance to their humanity. If you recall the argument of our fourth chapter, you will now see the just ground of the Christian Social Movement in the nineteenth century, and you may see why it was so easily led into approval of certain secular attacks upon the system of capitalist industrialism. It was an indisputable fact that in order to secure its own expansion, that system was actually depriving men of the means of the good life, and any movement that sought to recover for the workers an adequate remuneration for their toil seemed to be rightly orientated. What was sometimes overlooked was the truth that no ultimate problems are solved by seeking for all men the opportunity of an acceptance of life as idolatrous as the very system which it was desired to overthrow. Thus, while Christian social enthusiasm rightly agreed that under the wage system a living wage should be the first charge upon industry, and was indeed prepared for a much more drastic redistribution of wealth, it was attempting an impossible partnership when it

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sought alliances with Marxianism or with its derivatives; for these accepted the presuppositions of Capitalism in the sense that they accepted this world as the total human environment.

We have seen, however, that the system of capitalist industrialism is self-defeated. It has reached the final exposure of its anti-sacramental character in that it has, by its own principles, produced a scarcity which is so manifestly artificial as to be ludicrous, but which it cannot overcome. By thus withdrawing the material means, it has deprived mankind of its full opportunity of sacramental activity. The collectivist proposals which were offered in the day of the capitalist "success," generally assumed, as did Capitalism itself, that scarcity was a sufficiently normal feature of the economic operation to necessitate the constant toil of the masses of men as the condition of adequate production. The collectivists asked for a regulation of that toil and a distribution of its fruits upon an equalitarian basis; and this inevitably led them, upon their own assumptions, to accept a rigid surveillance and regimentation of the individual citizens in the common interest, as a necessary feature of the collectivist work-State. The fact that the so-called "common good," in the absence of personal liberty, could not be a "good" for man,

and must desiderate a despiritualised, dehumanised agglomeration unworthy of the name of society, seemed of small importance in comparison with the material safety which it was desired to establish for all men as the reward of their labour.

So long as the economic controversy was thus confined in its scope by the pressure of axioms received alike by capitalist and collectivist, Christian thought found it difficult to secure a firm foothold in the argument. If it rejected the collectivist philosophy, it seemed bound to accept the established system and to pursue a policy of palliation which had a regrettable habit of becoming a policy of innocuous phrases. If it accepted the collectivist outlook, there seemed inevitably to follow a descent to that spurious monism which made religion the handmaid of a social theory. And so long as this dilemma was regarded as insoluble, the Church must submit to a situation in which its own profound teaching regarding personality, society, and the meaning of the cultural task, was made to appear fantastic because, claiming an absolute validity, it was yet at the mercy of the economic factor. Whether through Capitalism or through Communism, that economic factor, so it appeared, must ultimately mould men and their associations.



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It has not yet been sufficiently observed that the exhaustion of Capitalism must involve the exhaustion of the communist alternative which was founded upon the same basal thesis. Marx expected that the capitalist development would be resolved into the collectivist State by its own native impetus. What has actually happened is that the foundation of the whole process has given way. Collectivist control of the mechanism devised by Capitalism can of itself offer no escape from the appalling situation in which the world now finds itself. For what is required in the first place is a means of making accessible to mankind the amazing abundance of real wealth which modern methods of production have created or made possible, but which neither mere Capitalism nor mere Collectivism is able effectively to distribute. The regimentation of persons in defence of general material security under a threat of scarcity, is now simply an irrelevant proposition. The crux of the problem is the habituated unwillingness of men to conceive a distribution of the means of life upon any other than a work-basis; for when we find economists of distinction recommending the deliberate creation of work as a means of distributing the products of work already done, and when we hear publicists of decent common sense urging thrift as a

means of reviving the trade which is perishing for lack of purchasers, we know that the old habit of thought is deeply ingrained. It is our contention that as long as that habit persists, both Capitalism and Communism are faced with an insoluble problem.

Now, the Church, with its firm faith in the divinely ordained purposiveness of human life, with its sacramental practice of which the only conceivable consummation must be a divine Kingdom incorporating all the values which have emerged in man's contact with his material environment, cannot be content to behold the frustration and decline of the human effort in this world. It is impelled by all its theology and experience to assert that the financial interpretation of abundance in terms of scarcity, the correlated refusal to provide the means of life except as a return for labour which is not required, the consequent crushing and thwarting of human power, the harrowing of millions of minds, with the introduction of the twin palliatives of birth control at one end and suicide at the other—that all this enormous menace to man, though it provide itself with specious explanations, is actually the lunacy of hell.

But if the Church's sacramental principle involves the doctrine of the use of the world by man for divine

ends, the Church cannot avoid the responsibility of seeking to restore to men an access to material resources which will enable them to pursue the cultural task and will give Christian teaching some ground and foothold in the practical organisation. We have to expound the truth that the falsely conceived end of modern industry has produced a threatening stultification; and we have to show that economic reality, so far from banishing Christian teaching to the realms of the fantastic, actually requires the Faith for its interpretation.

The primary need, therefore, is to procure the recognition of economic reality. To ask the Church to solve the present dilemma on the present terms is to invite the Church to join the general obfuscation. You cannot Christianise a system which is a demonstrated method of lowering the spiritual vitality of mankind. You cannot Christianise a mere confusion. You cannot Christianise a false account of the facts. And a Catholic sociology must insist that before any attempt is made at social and political reconstruction, the misrepresentation of economic fact by an obsolete system of credit and distribution shall cease.

If we are to propose a sacramental purpose in human association, we must demand an elementary veracity

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and rationality in man's relation to the material means. This demand resolves itself into a twofold requirement: First, that the actual power to consume commodities shall find its sanction in the quantity of commodities that can be produced. This means that production itself shall be for human need. And secondly, that since it is no longer possible to employ men wholly in the economic labour necessary for such production, the power to consume commodities shall, at least to some extent, be divorced from the work-basis and, within the given limit, be regarded as a human heritage.

I suggest that the social implications of the Catholic Revival will find a much more readily receptive field in an order which thus places the means of personal expression in the hands of all men, as a right, than in an order which, having proceeded by means of the deprivation and subjection of many, now finds itself unable to prevent the deprivation and disillusion of all. I will name three reasons for this belief.

First, the doctrine of social inheritance is congruous with that conception of the organic unity of the race which is implicit in Catholic theology. "The greatest factor in the creation of real wealth," says Major C. H. Douglas, "is the cultural inheritance of civilisation—scientific knowledge, tools, processes, organisation and

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so forth. A second factor is that of raw materials, and especially solar energy, and a third factor, of diminishing importance, is that of labour. This cultural inheritance is beyond dispute the birthright of the community and not of any section of it."<sup>6</sup> But we may add that the Western cultural inheritance which has produced the most immense potentiality of wealth, has been built around the core of the Christian Faith. The stabilising influence of the Church, the humanising effects of the Gospel, the contribution of Christian theology to that belief in the unity of nature which underlies science, have been potent, indeed, in the amassing of the cultural inheritance of which Major Douglas speaks. The conclusion I wish to expound at this point is that the Christian Baptism, which makes a child the inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, may rightly be held to imply that the child is the inheritor of the cultural fruits of the Faith; for surely they have their place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Baptismal doctrine is surely in support of the person's receiving as an endowment those gifts which God's Fatherhood and the human brotherhood have made available.

In the second place, economic freedom and independence provide the only completely ethical founda-

<sup>6</sup> *Daily Herald* (London), January 23, 1933.

tion of human co-operation. The only sure ground of goodness is liberty, and liberty itself implies a groundwork of economic right. "The whole conception of personality," says Dr. Temple, "requires that there should be some measure of personal life secured to every man before he begins to do anything at all."<sup>7</sup> The contrary opinion, that men cannot be trusted to perform their social duties excepting under the threat of starvation, ignores its own serious consequences. A person who works at the economic task merely for the sake of existence, is desperately tempted to confuse the apparent necessities of that task with the claims of morality. His ethical standards may easily fall into alignment with the hard rule that if he would live, he must accept the conditions which his "livelihood" imposes upon him. Such social service as is thus forced from men bears no spiritual value. It is the mere exploitation, by an economic order, of the human fear of death. It may be said that nature has pricked men, with this same fear, to the discovery of unimagined levels of attainment. But an economic system which rewards perpetual labour with a bare subsistence employs human fear not as a goad but as a chain.

If the economic co-operation of men is to be infused

<sup>7</sup> In an address to the Anglo-Catholic Summer School of Sociology. Cf. Ruth Kenyon, *The Catholic Faith and the Industrial Order*, p. 103.

with ethical reality, if it is to be addressed to a sacramental end, it must be a co-operation freely chosen. And this choice can be actual only where the material necessities of a sufficient "measure of personal life" are secured. The Pauline dictum, "If a man will not work neither shall he eat," is one which capitalist society has not sought to apply all round. As a moral principle it is, as Dr. Temple, quoting Paulsen, reminds us, an inversion of the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal."<sup>8</sup> It was relevant enough, when S. Paul uttered it; but when food becomes as abundant as air, and the opportunities for work grow scarce, the application of the dictum requires some modification. A man cannot be accused of unwillingness to work, merely because his work is patently unnecessary; and the passing of the need for labour upon the scale conceived as proper by the industrial era has neither destroyed a person's value nor abolished his need for bodily sustenance. We claim that the way is now opening toward a truer realisation of personal values.

Thirdly, I must point out that to secure for each person a minimum subsistence as an inheritance belonging to his human existence, is the only means of obtaining a truly ethical and rational construction of

<sup>8</sup> W. Temple, *loc. cit.*

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the social form. By this I mean that when the pressure of crude economic necessity is removed it will conceivably be possible for men to discuss the problems of human association, upon rational and moral grounds. The spurious democracy of England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reflects the exigencies of a particular economic arrangement. The proposals of Communism or of Fascism express the same assumptions differently treated. But if we are to have a politic befitting the dignity of man, and reflecting our faith that his task is to make of this world a sacrament of eternity, we must urge that the fear born of brute economic menace, and the surrender of the person whether to a capitalist or to a communist organisation, is now needless. The opportunity has arrived for man to assert with fuller meaning his citizenship in the City of God, as the primary consideration for earthly politics. If he shows but little readiness to do so at present, we must remember that the secular hypothesis has accustomed him to the false view that he is the prisoner of circumstances. It is highly improbable that men in their freedom would choose to erect a social and political structure upon the pattern of any political society now to be found in the world.

The abundance procurable by modern technology,



controlled for the ends of human consumption rather than misrepresented as scarcity by a system seeking only money-profit as the means of its own expansion—a system which has now revealed its inner frustration—undoubtedly promises a measure of human subsistence upon a basis other than that of an economic wage. It is actually this possibility, knocking at our doors, which is the cause of our confusion until we learn to accept it. And I see no possibility of producing harmony between the Catholic sacramental philosophy of life and the present economic situation, unless this be done. Man cannot any longer make a rational and ethical use of his material opportunity without some such wide readjustment. At all events, the present situation is fraught with the gravest peril for mankind, and, as we have seen, there seems no possibility that capitalist industrialism will be able, from its own resources, to restore the damaged edifice of our civilisation. There are three main dangers to be recognised and averted.

The huge mass of the world's unemployment, unaccompanied by an adequate attempt by society to preserve amongst the workless the material standards of the good life, or reasonable channels of personal self-expression, becomes an appalling welter of human

decay. It becomes a menace to the spiritual, mental and physical health of the human race. It threatens mankind with a grave decadence. In the second place, the hopelessness and desperation engendered are likely to produce a blind social strife, governed by the catch-words of demagogues, prone to violence, and lacking rational, creative directivity. Thirdly, the economic failure in a world organised in national states is always pressing upon us the danger of international conflict as the nations seek to solve their own economic and financial problems at the expense of their neighbours. And any such conflict might well prove the bloody twilight of humanity.

We need first of all the religious conception of man's sacramental function in the material world, which will condemn the fantasia of scarcity in the midst of plenty. For Catholic dogma must judge the burning of wheat and cotton and meat, not only as economic idiocy, but as an insult to the Blessed Sacrament; as it must condemn the description of the millions of the workless as "superfluous" as an insult to the Incarnation. The Faith must, upon its own principles, keep before the eyes of the world the spiritual end of economic effort; for that is the elementary condition of our escape from the dangers which now hang over us. The world must

be taught its business, and its business is the Kingdom of God.

In pursuit of this true end, production and consumption must be placed in a logical and human relation. The needs of man, and not the requirements of an inhuman system, must govern the process of work. It has therefore to be demanded that the distribution of goods shall be in factual accordance with the quantity of goods available: that is, upon a basis of real wealth, and not upon the quite disparate, irrelevant and obsolete metallic basis manipulated in particular interests to impose its own varying artificial values upon the real wealth of which it is supposed to be the symbol.<sup>9</sup> The world has been bemused by the magical rites and incantations of its financiers. The mere instrument of exchange has been allowed to prevent exchange, to cause the destruction of God's gifts and the starvation of God's children. But the sacramental relation of man to the material resources of the world necessitates an untrammelled access to those resources. This is a necessary prelude to the further demand that the system of public credit, the effective power to consume commodities, shall be divorced from the defunct work-

<sup>9</sup> "But what certainty is there in money, which, after all, holds the whole world together? It depends on the goodwill of a few capitalists mutually to keep to the agreement that one metal is worth more than another."—Ivar Kreuger. Quoted in *Manchester Guardian*, April 20, 1933.

basis, at least to the extent of the primary material requirements of human decency. It is upon such realistic reaction to the present immediate alternative of chaotic decline or unimaginable opportunity, that an informed appreciation of the implications of sacramental religion will lead us to insist. At any rate, it is true that those English thinkers who, remaining faithful to the traditions of the Catholic Revival, have striven to preserve its social inferences, have for the most part reached some such conclusions as those I have adumbrated.

It is obvious that the social prospect thus arising must bring with it stupendous problems of its own, and some of these I shall mention in our closing chapter. What I am here urging is that the sacramental view of the human situation means that the world is for man's use, for divine ends; and that the deflection of available and sorely needed material means, the deprivation of the natural instrument, by the operation of a mere system, is in the eyes of the Catholic Faith a wrong and a stupidity which must be removed before it produces the decadence of man in social disruption and international strife.

But before we come to the consideration of the social problems likely to confront the Church as the result

of such an initial application of sacramental principles in our contemporary world, we must turn to another question of elementary importance. We have discussed at some length the sacramental conception of man's relation to his physical environment. But the sacramental principle involves the notion of human cohesion. Sacraments are the characteristic functions of the Church. And if the Church's Sacraments are capable of exhibiting the true relation of man to his material means, the Church which acts in the Sacraments must be deemed capable of manifesting the true relations of men in their employment of those means.

The Church acting in her Sacraments sets forth the principle of a co-operative fellowship in which society is thoroughly and completely personal, and personality is thoroughly and completely social. And it is precisely because the sacramental acts of the Church desiderate such human relations in the whole economic and cultural operation, that I am convinced that democracy, not only in the political, but also in the industrial, organisation, is the form of government most truly consonant with the Catholic Faith. But I am aware that this opinion is not universally accepted either by Catholics or by democrats, and we must therefore discover the grounds of disagreement.

It will be said in the first place that the structure of the Church is itself hierarchical, and is thus necessarily opposed to the democratic principle. And at first sight it may seem that only a forced interpretation can deduce from a hierarchical Church the conclusion of political and industrial democracy. But we have to consider that the hierarchical nature of the Church is not what specifically determines the *spiritual* status and relation of its members. In his personal relation to the spiritual and sacramental realities, bishop or priest is upon the same level as every other member. The Church's hierarchy exists, not as a divine revelation concerning the true structure of society, but as a necessary preservative of the historical identity and continuity of the Church in an alien world. The particular society of the Church finds its significance in its historical origin. It is based upon the Apostles. Its hierarchy is thus primarily an identifying characterisation, though this necessarily makes of it the actual sanction of the means of grace. Moreover, it is empowered only in a representative capacity. So true is this, that it is held by the Church that the spiritual failure of bishop or priest invalidates no sacrament; for a sacrament is an act of the Church.

We have further to reflect that the Catholic religion

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claims to effect a living and direct relation between each member of the Church and Christ. Unlike the Republic of Plato, in which the animating social principle, the vision of the Idea of the Good, was perceived only by the philosophers, the Christian society invites all its members to living fellowship with its animating social principle which is Christ the Lord. Thus the Christian Society will be composed of persons who draw the sanction and the creative power of their individuality, through their fellowship in the Redeemed Society, from the Living Head. And the Faith, teaching such valuation and sublimation of human personality, is bound to demand that in the political and industrial associations of men personality shall never be regarded as the means to ends thrust upon it from without, which the person himself is helpless to choose or to reject.

But it will be said that Catholicism has, by some apparently persistent intuition, manifested a revulsion from political democracy, and that where it has been compelled to make terms with democratic States, it has done so uneasily and with a certain inner reluctance, as if it were asked to breathe an unnatural air. And it will be asserted that the Tractarians themselves exhibited strongly this same characteristic. We have

already examined at length the principles involved in the Tractarians' attitude to the political and economic movements of their times, and if we turn to the pages of Michel de la Bedoyère,<sup>10</sup> we find a Catholic defence of democracy upon the lines we then indicated.

M. de la Bedoyère deals with the criticism of democracy offered by Idealists and Realists. The Idealists are those bureaucratic socialists who wish to achieve an egalitarian management of the State by the enlightened, upon the assumption that the majority will learn only very slowly what is good for them, and by exercising political power in their half-informed condition, will produce confusion not easily overcome. The Realists are the economic experts who desire to carry out the exploitation of natural resources without the hindrance of a politically empowered but "uninstructed" public opinion. And de la Bedoyère remarks that "both are trying to solve the problem of human life by denying that man is human. They are avoiding the real issue, which is to see how all men can be given a chance of a life worthy of their humanity."<sup>11</sup>

He distinguishes, however, between "genuine political democracy and the 'romantic-democratic' faith which is our present substitute for religious faith."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> M. de la Bedoyère, *The Drift of Democracy*.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.



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He argues that democracy, truly regarded, is a means, but in the modern world has been regarded as an end, so that within the ambit of a State democratically organised it is conceived that man must necessarily find the whole scope and meaning of his existence. This is that secularism against which, as we saw, the Tractarians raised their standard of battle; and it is democracy thus presented which Catholicism must perforce reject. "It is not surprising," says M. de la Bedoyère, "that in the political field, the traditional form of Christianity has not accepted the logical conclusions of that democracy which asserts that man can do what he likes, since there is no power greater than man."<sup>13</sup>

It may in truth be said that the Church, in those ages in which it attained its greatest power and influence, accepted the feudal structure of society, and was largely disposed to consider this the divine order. But against this it may be recalled that neither the mediæval situation nor mediæval thought attained a prolonged fixity: that the feudal arrangement itself afforded certain definite rights to all men, and was capable of interpretation by the doctrine of a body in which all the members performed a necessary and therefore honourable function.<sup>14</sup> And it is interesting

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13. Cf. M. B. Reckitt, *Faith and Society*, p. 253.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., by John of Salisbury, in his *Polycraticus*.

to observe that S. Thomas Aquinas saw in the life of the town, in which the feudal restrictions were largely abated by the guilds and the beginnings of citizenship, a greater opportunity for a true Christian politic. What might have been the social issue of the mediæval development, but for the secularist departure, no man can say.

But there has remained in the world the witness of a supernatural fellowship, and this must carry a perpetual protest against every system which ignores the value of a man; for it is impossible to divorce the Christian valuation of a human person from the conception of his responsibility for contributing to the social will. For, again to quote M. de la Bedoyère, "By the spirit of democracy I do not mean this or that democratic experiment, which arises, is criticised, modified and then disappears; I mean the fundamental moral intuition that each and every person has a right to count in the determination of the order to which all must submit, if they are to live together, and that no person may be sacrificed for the good of others."<sup>15</sup> It is this conception that is approved by the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, rather than the Kantian doctrine of every man as "an end in himself." For in the

<sup>15</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 10-11.

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Kingdom, the constituent individuals are destined to sit with their Lord in His throne. It is a Kingdom which can exist only in the free, creative co-operation of its members, not because they are super-men, but merely because they are men, and this is the meaning of manhood revealed by Christ and His Church.

The establishment of a formal political democracy, however, without the extension of the democratic principle to the sphere of industrial co-operation, is bound to result in the frustration of democracy even in the political field. For the interests of ownership and mastery in industry will be tempted to employ their economic power in order to control the political machine; and where this cannot be done directly it will be done indirectly, as through the control of the Press. The capitalising of mind-paralysing amusement, and a thousand modes of distracting the attention of the crowds from vital social issues, will serve to retain in the hands of the rich the real power of direction in the public life. The very questions upon which men are asked to vote at elections will be either the disputes of plutocrats or questions largely framed with the purpose of preserving silence about other and more germane questions. And only by the most strenuous efforts of socially-minded and enlightened publicists

will the political democracy itself be saved from becoming a farcical form.

It is this consideration which Maurice Reckitt has in mind, when he declares of the nineteenth century, that "democratic forms might multiply in politics, but in the personal life of man responsibility belonged increasingly to the boss, the foreman, and the landlord." He holds that "any disposition to claim for democracy the special patronage of Christianity needs to be very carefully guarded," partly for the very reason that "the limitations imposed upon their pretensions to self-government by the existence of plutocratic forces superior to their jurisdiction," leaves to the democratic systems of the modern world respect "only for the aspirations they falsely profess to embody."<sup>16</sup>

The principles of sacramental fellowship cannot be arrested on the borders of the political organisation. They must be extended to the whole of life, and must therefore become active in the association of men for economic purposes. That is to say, the worker must be considered in the light of the truths that his personality is inseparable from his work: that where personality is, there is society; and that where society is engaged with its material medium, there is the sacra-

<sup>16</sup> M. B. Reckitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 253, 4.

mental potentiality. The abstraction of economic industry from the personal-social relation is, in the last resort, to be described as sacrilege; but that relation can never be restored within a system in which labour is bought and sold as a commodity, and in which personal rights are defended only by a perpetual campaign always upon the point of developing into a class war.

The establishment of a degree of shared public credit as a personal inheritance, creating such basic independence as we have already discussed, would in itself go far to alter the entire condition of employment; for men in possession of a guaranteed minimum subsistence would not be browbeaten by economic fear into the acceptance of terms of employment destructive of their self-respect. But the alternative to the control of both industry and operatives by the representatives of financial ownership, is not necessarily control by a mob, or even by a committee. We have to consider that both the equality of persons and the inequality of their personal powers are facts. Natural leadership is a genuine element in the divine economy, and it is an endowment intended to be used for social ends; and the conduct of industry for the satisfaction of human need, and the consequent abrogation of the capitalist

profit-interest as its dominant motive, would be much more likely to discover the best leadership than is at present normally possible.

For under our present system, those become leaders who are most likely to serve a falsely orientated economic purpose. Untrammelled human common sense could usually be trusted to secure a worthy leadership and management, where the purpose of the whole undertaking was a matter of real human choice. And the leadership could well be one of considerable authority; for the principle of democratic fellowship would be sufficiently preserved if the policy of the industry, the appointment of the management and the definition of the area of control to be allotted to it, were subjects upon which the workers themselves had some right of decision.

If such an extension of the democratic principle of fellowship based upon the divine valuation of a man strike the modern mind as fantastic, I must remark that this wonder is the measure of our modern departure from loyalty to the Lord who, speaking of the actual economic task, bade us seek first the Kingdom of God. And I must remind you that over one great part of the earth's surface it is now claimed that precisely this extension of democracy to industry has been

accomplished, not only without the sanction and inspiration of Christianity, but with definite opposition to all religion. The Bolshevik experiment in Russia must receive the steady and concentrated attention of all those who are seeking to restore to the Church a social conscience and a constructive sociological purpose. The great menace of Communism is not that it asks men to share the world as brethren. No Christian could describe such an invitation as perilous to the only Society to which he is utterly pledged, which is the Kingdom of God. And if we are to reply to the Bolshevik argument, it must be with the weapons of the Faith, and not with the silly and timid spite born of self-interest and class-consciousness.

Bolshevism is a menace to the world because it seeks, however distortedly, to achieve the world-aim of Christianity, while rejecting as irrelevant or pernicious that supernatural end which alone can support and make significant the world-purpose. It presents "a religious psychology," says Nicholas Berdyaev, "without a religious ontology." Berdyaev traces the origins of its special mentality in the Russian religious consciousness and shows how that particular religious habit has now become occupied with substitutes for God. "The fact that the idea of God is driven out of

man's consciousness in no way leads to man and the things of man being finally freed and finding their self-expression; the result is that certain strange inhuman or superhuman forces appear in his consciousness and begin to oppress him."<sup>17</sup>

Now, the chief of those oppressive forces is the very idea of Man which Bolshevik philosophy represents as the guarantee of liberty and progress. For the idea of Man, emasculated of a mystical and metaphysical valuation of personality, must needs seek expression in some absolute collectivism, against which the person is devoid of rights and to which he makes no true creative contribution. The Collectivist State becomes an arbitrary God, able to masquerade as Humanity merely because it seeks an egalitarian distribution of material resources.

"The Communist State," says Berdyaev, "is quite different from the ordinary lay, secularised State. It is a sacred, 'theocratic' State, which takes over the functions that belong to the Church. It forms men's souls, gives them an obligatory creed, demands their whole soul, exacts from them not only 'what is Cæsar's,' but even 'what is God's.'<sup>18</sup> The same writer has elsewhere criticised in forceful fashion the complete sub-

<sup>17</sup> Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 38.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.



ordination of the person to this unnatural and dehumanised State, which is neither an association nor a cohesion of free men, nor even the subordination of men to the will of a personal ruler, but the obliteration of men by de-personalised Man.

"The Soviet, Marx-Lenin, world view," he says, "asserts not the activity of man, but the activity of society or of a social collective body, which suppresses man and transforms him into its own instrument. The activity of man implies that we acknowledge man's creative initiative, his freedom of action. Man is active if he is a free spiritual being possessing an unconditional value; if he is not transformed into a simple instrument of social process. Man is active if he creates the social process, not if the social process creates him. . . . If we wanted to borrow from Christian terminology, we might say that all activity proceeds from the 'grace' of the collective body, from the Communist Party, and not from man's freedom." And in reply to the communist argument that Christianity has conceived that God alone is active and man passive beneath God's will, Berdyaev retorts that "only that which proceeds from within merits the name of activity. If I toil from morning to night carrying out the compulsory orders of the dominating classes of the

State, or of society, or of the social collective body, or of the Central Committee, I remain passive, not active."<sup>19</sup>

The erection of a collectivist State endowed with compulsory power, upon such a depersonalised notion of man, misses the centre and core of the sacramental society, which is spiritual communion. True human fellowship cannot grow from such a root. The collectivist abstraction is the object of a veneration that finds expression in language and gestures which minds less unsophisticated than those of the new age in Russia find amusing; but up to the present it has been powerless to deepen or ennoble the idea of what a man is. And in order to explain the essential nature of Man in the collective sense which appears to be the only sense that matters, the philosophers of Bolshevism are reverting to a materialism which the serious thought of Europe has finally discarded. It follows that Bolshevism is not a method of the spiritual co-operation of free men, but only the last refuge of an exhausted secularism, in which the human face and the human soul begin to look strange and unnatural. It is not the genuine source and promise of man's new world, but the pathetic remainder of a stale and out-

<sup>19</sup> N. Berdyaev, "Christianity and Human Activity," *Christendom* (1932).

worn period in which man sinks near to the final frustration of the spirit.

The main European reaction to the menace of Bolshevism has assumed the form of Fascism, in which an attempt is made to secure the control of the growing complexity of the political and economic factors by dictatorship. Beneath many sounding phrases, the Fascist purpose is undoubtedly to revive the efficiency of the system of capitalist industrialism and armed nationalism. This purpose may require that the dictator shall upon occasions administer unpleasant medicines to that system, but he is expected to preserve its life against the threat of Communism. The Bolshevik and the Fascist methods between them expose the moral and intellectual bankruptcy of a secularised Europe.

For Fascism, also, finds itself compelled to distrust the democratic principle, and to subject men to an extraneously imposed order. The apologetic which asserted that the Latin mind, from the depths of its subconsciousness, discovers a leader by a process of direct intuition, and that such a leader by a similar intuition interprets the true social will, was always a poor argument. For the one thing certain of the subconscious is that its predilections cannot be relied upon. But the Fascist dictator has now appeared amongst the

purest Nordic race, which was never previously credited with a subconscious political sagacity. And even in Britain, where the popular political genius has expressed itself in classic models of representative government, there are those who hunger and thirst for a dictatorship. There is no need to resort to the misty depths of the subconscious for an explanation. The movement is born of a thoroughly conscious dread that the old order may crack and collapse. That dread is indeed well founded; and Fascism, in seeking to preserve the modern edifice, is doomed to failure. For the self-contradiction which we discovered at the heart of the modern economic refuses to be either rationalised or expelled.

Neither Communism nor Fascism has yet faced the dominant reality of our situation, which is that the work-State is obsolete. They are confronting each other in a foolish contest to decide whether men shall receive capitalist or collectivist permission to win a scanty subsistence as a reward for a life of toil and for obedience to an authority before which they are helpless. The true potentiality of our situation, however, is that all men may receive such sufficiency as shall allow them a creative and sacramental self-expression, by which they may construct a fellowship having its roots in the

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spiritual order. The alternative to the acceptance of this possibility is a world anarchy in which the cultures created by centuries of labour, thought and prayer may come to an enormous wreck. It is only a Catholic sociology which can be great enough to interpret aright the potentiality now in the world. The Oxford Movement in the English Church was a stage in the recovery of the Catholic prophetic witness and the Catholic world order. The question that still remains dark and doubtful before our eyes is whether the resurgence of the idea of the Divine Sacramental Society can win the allegiance of the western world with sufficient rapidity to avert the threatening disaster.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE CHURCH AND THE FUTURE OF SOCIETY

Early in the course of our studies in the social implications of the Tractarian claim, we found ourselves confronted with a conception widely different from any that could be deduced from the Tractarian principles; the conception of the evolution of a satisfying human society by the natural resources of human wisdom and experience. To this process, it was supposed, the Church might give her blessing. She might even perform some service as a valuable ally of the operative social forces; but she must be humbly willing to learn from secular sources what lines were to be followed in the formulation of the social paradise. We saw reason to reject that conception, first upon theological grounds, and secondly upon evidence as to the real nature and trend of the modern secular movement out of which the desired society was expected to emerge. We saw that the only possible foundation or pattern of a true human order must be in a social cohesion produced by a divine intervention, charac-

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terised by a revolutionary penitence and endowed with supernatural grace. We have seen too, that such a Society must remain upon its own divine foundation if it is to unfold its true nature in the world; and we observed that a situation has arisen in our times, which, if it is not to issue in confusion and despair, must be approached upon the principles of that Society's sacramental fellowship.

We who have been reared in the age of secular assumptions, when the great business of the western world was carried forward with no vital religious direction, must open our eyes to the amazing opportunity that is now before the Church and the Faith. We who have been accustomed to the world's view of the Church as an irrelevant epiphenomenon of the successful secular process, have now to behold that world halted, bewildered, stumbling and groping, finding that its broad road has led to the brink of destruction. Now, surely, the time has come when we must refuse any longer to entangle the Divine Society with the pre-suppositions and aims of that secular process, lest we fall with it into the ditch. Now is the time when with renewed faith and confidence we must claim for Christian Truth the power to direct the world's first, faltering steps upon another road.

The modern period, so called, which is now expiring before our eyes, has assuredly seen the nadir of Christianity in history, and there are not a few who, in their public utterances, make bold to assume that from so steep a descent the Christian Church, the Christian Idea, will never rise again. For them, Christ is numbered in limbo with Osiris and Tammuz. And seeing how the secularisation of the West is now eroding the religions of the East, they proclaim that the race of man has dispensed with the need for religion. It is perhaps curious that with this calm assurance in their hearts, they themselves continue to be so preoccupied with religion and so angrily hostile toward Christianity. Some of these gentlemen seem almost to have religion on the brain. Possibly they are in that psychological condition in which a man hates a thing which he has tried to despise, because he suspects it, after all, to be right. And whether Christianity is again to rise to a truly Catholic prestige in the world or not, one thing is certain. The modern world is not going to rise again, and as yet no acceptable successor to it has been discovered by those who refuse the religious claim. Our belated Comtists have perforce to conduct their speculations amidst the ruins of a positivist order. What they need to consider is that the



practical dismissal of the Christian Faith and the Christian dogma from the control of the world's life took place long before they were born. That has been the characterising achievement of the western world in the modern age. *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*

Our contention is that the alternative before mankind is the reformulation of civilisation around a resurgent Christian Church, or a human chaos of which the dark possibilities are incalculable. All the elements of collapse are present: a culture largely severed from its roots, without the springs of nourishment and unable to resist the strangling advances of parasitic growths themselves impermanent; the loosening of moral bonds and the substitution of a "new morality" which turns out to be only a hoary symptom of decadence; the loss of a sense of human purpose and direction; the threatened failure of the human mind to control the economic mechanism for any end at all,—with the possibility of terrible physical consequences for the race; the unnatural economic pressure upon the national States of the world, with the consequent danger of a blind, demonic military struggle; the restless dissatisfaction of vast masses of men with the social order in which they find themselves; and finally the reaction of

these conditions upon the minds and bodies of men and women, producing in politics and in life here frivolity and there despair, but always tending to dehumanisation.

But if the elements of collapse are present, so also is the one possibility of restoration, not indeed of the world-order we have known, but of the dignity of man in a worthy society. That possibility remains, because the Church, itself outwardly broken and distracted, still abides in the world, the Body and the Bride of Christ, the living Sacrament of Man Redeemed. It would be a grave neglect of duty were I, having travelled so far to discuss with you the social implications of the Oxford Movement, to fail to enforce upon you, by every means in my power, the lessons which that uprising of faithful men carries for us in our day and generation. And it was their reassertion of the idea and the fact of the Church in the circumstances of their time, that we have been compelled to consider as pregnant with social meaning. We have traced the issues to which the world has been led by the standards which they assailed. And even to our dim human sight, it seems that the shadow of defeat is not upon the derided Tractarians of Oxford, but upon the forces they were concerned to oppose, then

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so confident, afterwards so magnified and swollen with success, and now so exhausted and discredited.

The situation of the Oxford leaders was more humanly hopeless than ours. Neither in the condition of the Church itself, nor in the tides of life in the outer world, was there anything to suggest that those men, in proclaiming their doctrine of the Church, were in touch with constructive reality. Not only was the Church of England apparently dying, so that Dr. Arnold thought no human power could preserve it, and Greville believed it already doomed; not only was it so unpopular that mobs burned a bishop's house and hustled an archbishop in the streets. The meaning of the situation was more serious: it was that the condition of the English Church appeared to coincide with the increasingly current secular judgment that the Church was an effete instrument, that the very idea of the Church was useless; that the only human end worth considering could be performed with complete disregard of any institution claiming a divine foundation and authority. Indeed, it was widely doubted whether any institution could long continue sincerely to make such a claim. It was in such circumstances that the Oxford Reformers invited the Church of England to proclaim herself integral to the supernatural society.

And in our second chapter we discovered how, in accepting the conflict between this society and the world as organised apart from its dogmas, they found themselves forced toward the belief that the Church must needs discover herself as the true social foundation.

During the remainder of the nineteenth century, the Catholic doctrine of the Church spread through the Anglican body, and it may be said that it affected in some degree every party and school of thought within the Anglican communion. But during that time the secularised order reached its most convincing triumphs, and of this success Britain herself appeared as the chief exemplar. Her imperial sway in the world, her enormous financial power and industrial and commercial activity, together with occasional movements and periods of truly Liberal policy, created in the minds of millions of Britons the notion of the British Empire as destined to endow a grateful world with the choicest fruits of humanism.

Variations upon this theme employed the banjos of Mr. Rudyard Kipling and a score of minor poets. And those of a religious turn of mind could reflect that in the possession of an Established Church, England had appropriated the oracles of God. For the more the Church asserted her divine origin, the more it seemed

that the British Empire was blessed, and the English a chosen race. Those who made the British Empire, however, were less concerned with spiritual blessings than with dividends, and it was in the name of no sacramental fellowship that the map of the world was so largely painted red.

This secular confidence persisted in Britain, perhaps until the close of the first decade of the twentieth century. But there had been premonitory symptoms of change. The height of the age had been reached at the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897; but not long afterwards Richard Whiteing, in *No. 5 John Street* and other novels, was proclaiming to the educated public that the shining imperial structure rested upon a morass of social injustice and misery. There followed the South African War, which suggested to many men of goodwill that the driving forces of our civilisation had passed into the control of cynical and materialistic purpose. Meanwhile it was observed that the English people were undergoing a strange psychological transformation. A new, exciting, and not overscrupulous journalism had made its appearance upon a large and organised scale. Symptoms of restlessness and irritability, a responsiveness to crude mob-suggestion, a desire for a more rapid stream of "sen-

sations," an unprecedented hypnotism by the gigantic in human concerns, and other signs too numerous to catalogue, together with a demonstrated decline of the habit of public worship, seemed to indicate that English life was being shaped by influences of which the true nature and direction had not been estimated. Social students agreed that the phenomena of Mafeking Night before the Mansion House in London, of which I myself was a spectator, marked the departure of much of an older England.

The truth was, of course, that now were becoming visible the real effects of the acceptance of secularism, as the last habits of the older culture wore away. But the idealism of the English soul was not yet finally quenched. When the jingo frenzies which had accompanied the South African War had died away, they were followed by some years of genuine social enthusiasm. This was the period when Labour first emerged as a power in Parliament, and when a Liberal Government, under a storm of abuse from a privileged minority, introduced and partly carried through a remarkable programme of social reform closely touching the lives of the workers. Englishmen who are now middle-aged or elderly have at least one advantage over the young. They have lived through those years when

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young men saw visions and old men dreamed dreams: when the prophetic witness of generations seemed at length to be bearing fruit, and a passion for social righteousness swept through the land. It seemed to many of us that we then had our feet upon the road to the City of God. The will for righteousness and peace was strong, and we believed it could and would prevail. Alas! We had not measured aright the actual balance of interests which controlled the world of our day. We had not grasped the truth that social justice and international peace were impossible attainments upon the basis of a world-system organised for incongruous ends. We seemed to see a desired haven, but the fierce tides bore us to the rocks.

Even before the Great War, signs were not lacking that there were at large in the world powers and tendencies capable of checking the sincerest efforts of social goodwill. There was the phenomenon of the increasing discrepancy in the distribution of wealth, unabated by the unprecedented taxation of the rich. There was the fact of the constant pressure by rising prices upon the real wage of the workers. Strikes and lock-outs were frequently recurring features of industrial life. And from time to time the menace of war amongst the Great Powers of Europe awoke, to recall

us to the stark reality of the fundamental disease of our world and to the doom appointed for it. But few there were who understood, and even when at length the first guns boomed in the summer air, we did not know that they were sounding the death-knell of an age. The nations were summoned to battle upon this side or that. Each had its apologia, each its "just cause," wherewith to defend itself in the courts of high heaven and before the judgment of posterity. It did not occur to them that heaven and posterity might consider that in this conflict the nations were sufficiently judging, and condemning, themselves: that all the feverish energies of those years were the energies of suicide. The modern world had declared that its own continued existence was impossible.

The War was the shattering of human idealism by the stronger and more inherently characteristic elements of the modern world-order. When the agonising peoples broke at last from their death-grapple, one voice was lifted alone in their counsels to speak for a peace worthy of human dignity. It was the voice of an American President, and it was largely unavailing. The forces that had produced the War were those that directed the peace which now left the nerves of Europe strung to the pitch of exasperation. Their grim reality



had outlasted the flimsy dreams in which the War had seemed to the Allies a crusade for humanity, and they secured a peace of which swollen armaments, revolutions and counter-revolutions, industrial disputes and fierce economic rivalry, together with a decline of morality and a general flippancy of disillusion, were the most prominent lineaments. But the now unrestrained exhibition and operation of the dark, determining motives in the modern western world, was indeed the closing story of that world's self-stultification. Nemesis was now close at hand. Within a few years the whole economic and financial mechanism, the instrument of the world's false aim, was slowing down. It became unable any longer to employ either men or money for its purpose, upon a scale adequate to the needs dictated by its own system. The huge economic decline continued. It spread from shore to shore. It involved the most able and productive peoples, until it threatened and still threatens such a paralysis of human effort as may mean the end of our civilisation.

I must repeat here what I regard as the all-important consideration in a religious view of this disorder. We see around us to-day the effects, now worked out through the long tangle of the generations, of that positivist orientation of the mind of man which was

effected in the post-renaissance era, and has come to be the main characteristic of our common life. And again I must insist that we do not approach an understanding of the Oxford Movement unless we see in it the resurgence of another conception of the basis and purpose of world-order. The Oxford Revival did not merely remind men of spiritual reality. It reminded them of the Church, which is a specific social form supernaturally founded and shaped. And our thesis is that only upon the principles of that Divine Society can the true elements and fruits of modern culture be rescued from the waste and frustration now threatened as the result of their misuse, and made available as an unprecedented means to the spiritual end.

We have examined the nature of the present economic *impasse*. Its immediate cause is the inherent self-contradiction of our system, made visible now that it has become a world system and has thus to live upon its own resources. Its vicious circle will not admit of the employment of modern mechanical power in industry, and at the same time permit the consumption of the industrial product. The machine, taken up by the capitalist profit-purpose, with the consequently more rapid expansion of the system, has provided the world with abundance. But the system which has operated

the machine has necessarily caused it to destroy the demand for its own manufactures, since it has required that the wage which constitutes the greater part of purchasing power shall be derived from an amount of human employment that the machine itself makes unnecessary.

From this there follows one sure conclusion. The power age cannot continue as a profit age along the old lines. The power age, which is a proper product of human reason and experience, demands a new purpose. Modern productivity cannot be utilised except with the design of supplying human need as its first aim. And we have seen that the sanctions of the sacramental fellowship of the Church enforce this demand, and provide it with spiritual and ethical realism. It thus appears that the Catholic Revival in the English Church was the beginning of a potential reshaping of human ends, arising in that land which had been in the forefront of the secular advance, had reaped the greatest harvest of its gold, and had suffered perhaps the most obscene accompaniments of the process.

Within twenty-five years of the preaching of the Assize Sermon at Oxford, the Church of which I am rector was built, and from the first its clergy and people adhered to the Tractarian standards and followed the

development of the Revival in teaching and practice. It stands to-day as a protest against the powers that created its surroundings. There were sometimes brawls in the parish and scenes of disorder in the Church because, to some minds, lights and processions appeared to endanger something they vaguely conceived as English religion. What was in reality being threatened was that whole concatenation of false philosophy and false economics which had created the dark and monstrous slums, the forlorn deserts of mean streets, had sold men, women and children into bondage, and choked the beauty of the human spirit for the sake of money.

The full effect of the Revival was not to be found in vestments and incense, nor in the ennoblement of Church architecture, nor even in a truer theology and a more diligent pastorate. All these are lovely and worthy results. But the full effect will be found only when the Faith becomes the co-ordinating centre of human effort. The Oxford Movement was part of that wider revival of Catholic thought which has now become one of the most notable features of the intellectual situation at the very time when the exhaustion of the secular adventure has produced so inclusive a confusion. To learn the right use of the world, and the satisfying structure of society in that operation, men

must now return to the principles of the sacramental fellowship from which they have strayed so far.

But the very conditions of the material solution of our problem will bring their own enormous challenge to mind and spirit, partly because man advances only by facing and overcoming difficulties, and partly because the whole pressure of the age that is passing has been such as to thwart the preparation of the human soul for the new tasks confronting it. The central issue can be succinctly indicated. If the age of mechanical power cannot employ human labour upon the process of economic production in such manner that labour shall continue to form the normal source of man's effective demand for goods; and if it be proposed that the human race is to continue to live at least at what we have learned to regard as an adequate economic level, the distribution of credit must be conducted upon other than a work basis. This, and much more than this, is certainly possible, if the ultimate ownership of credit be claimed by the community and related to the factual or potential reality of production. In other words, a power age is irrationally construed unless it be economically interpreted as a leisure age. And here arises the whole array of those new problems of which I have spoken.

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The only redistribution of wealth that can preserve the human decencies must be accompanied by a redistribution of leisure. And I must point out, to begin with, that however great may seem the perils contained in such a development, they are certainly not greater than those which surround us so long as we hesitate to make the necessary advance. These we have discussed at sufficient length. What are the dangers ahead?<sup>1</sup>

There is, first, the possibility that a measure of economic independence divorced from the necessity for work, would be accepted by large sections of our population as a sufficient means of subsistence; that there would be a disposition to evade even the work that was necessary, though the performance of work would increase a person's income from subsistence to varying levels of plenty; that production would necessarily be reduced to the measure required to sustain the minimum general income; that the eagerness of a minority would be checked by the unwillingness of the majority to co-operate in greater effort; and that the labour requisite for higher material standards of life could then be secured only by some bureaucratic control which would reduce personal "independence" to the mere certainty of physical sufficiency.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. a notable series of papers on the subject of the Leisure Age by P. E. T. Widdrington, in *Christendom* (1931).

This gloomy view of the prospect, however, makes some very large assumptions, amongst which is the somewhat unsupported one that a man is naturally a pig. It omits to allow for the creative, constructive instinct of man, and the effect upon this of his liberation from false ends. It overlooks the fact that such general behaviour as it fears would speedily reduce the personal income derived as credit apart from work and that the level of minimum subsistence would then quickly sink. It forgets that the very abundance of leisure will destroy one of the prime causes of laziness in the industrial era—the everlasting demands of an economic task without either adequate remuneration or sufficient outlet for a man's creative powers. It neglects, too, the possibility that a power age will see the establishment of industry in smaller units than those to which we have become accustomed, so that the results of personal effort will bring a more direct and certain return to the particular persons making that effort.

Yet it is obvious that when the main compulsion to work has been removed or mitigated, if no constructive ideals be found to occupy the place of the compulsion, grave trouble may arise. The object of work, the true purpose and value of "goods," must be the

subject matter of a new education of the human mind. For, on the other hand, there is the possibility that men, finding that their labour brings them a direct return in immediate access to greater abundance, may again sell their souls, no longer indeed to a system which rewards them with a bare livelihood, but to sheer materialistic luxury, sacrificing the higher powers of the spirit for the sake of possessions which will not then be the less corrupting because they are more equitably distributed. A realistic access to the fruits of production will not inevitably limit production to the reasonable satisfaction of needs. If there is a danger that men may not work enough, there is also the danger that they may work too much. They may employ what a rational interpretation of reality would regard as leisure, merely in adding to their possessions. The co-ordination of production with need may be mis-developed into a co-ordination of production with "wants," up to the limit of the possible exploitation of nature's resources, with as little regard for the needs of later generations as capitalism itself has exhibited. Such may become the organised human habit. The mechanical device of a realistic credit system is not enough, without the cultivation of spiritual values. And here will appear a tremendous need for the assertion of the



sacramental principle, which regards the access to material means as of no significance in itself apart from the spiritual end to which the means are to be addressed.

But there are other dangers. In a society of which the members are delivered from the assaults of economic fear, and in which they are liberated from the bonds of long daily toil, will there be no temptation to self-indulgence upon a hitherto impossible scale? Will not the devices of science and the resources of material wealth be employed to content the more facile sides of human nature? Will not the "mass man," the *bête noire* of Ortega y Gasset, be more than ever in evidence? And further, what will be the effect of the complete economic liberation of women in such a society? We see how the external changes of our own times have made it possible for theorists like Mr. Bertrand Russell to argue that the family is a doomed institution and the whole sexual relation in need of an open-minded revision. Will not a leisure society invite the acceleration of those very social and ethical changes which we as Christians are bound to deplore and to oppose? And finally, will not the entire situation, with the removal of the stimulus of work as the main pre-occupation of the majority, and the passing of the

worst of economic risk from the lives of men, induce a softness, a flabbiness of mental tissue, and eventually a boredom from which those who are still men might well pray to be delivered, even at the cost of reaccepting the toil and anxiety which now burden the lives of most?

In considering these possibilities, we must recall the truth that God's best gifts are always dangerous. The greatest opportunities are always capable of the most disastrous misuse. Yet if man is to realise his potentialities, he must deal with the whole of the situation arising in the reality of his experience in this world. And a gift and an opportunity are now being thrust before him for his use or misuse, whereby he may rise to heights of personal and social expression, or may sink, perhaps, into the mire. What I am concerned to point out is that now, more than ever, because the issues are more pointedly fraught with possibilities of triumph or defeat, the moral and spiritual guidance of man is of the utmost importance.

In such a society as appears possible, the leadership of the Church, the practice of the Christian fellowship, the example of Christian people, will be more than ever the necessary leaven. It may, indeed, be said that the tendency to self-indulgence as we now know it, is

a reaction against a soulless order of regimented labour and stigmatised unemployment. It may be said that certain present-day movements in the fields of domestic life and sexual ethics are largely due to the unnatural conditions imposed by the modern system in its final phases. And these contentions have much truth in them. But whether a generation so drifting will be fitted to achieve a new direction in other conditions must be doubtful, unless we can look to an awakened Church, realising to the full the opportunity that is before her and the awful responsibility resting upon her, appearing with a vision of life capable of winning the allegiance of what is best in men.

It seems that once again the Church will have to undertake the task of directing the very motive and conception of education. An industrial era has provided us with a false substitute for education, in that it has employed the schools to fit our youth for "earning a livelihood," as though that were to be the supreme response of an immortal soul to the wonder of the Universe. The generations to come will need to be educated for life: for life which will offer them in overflowing measure the perilous gifts of personal freedom, material sufficiency, and time which they may call their own.

What a possibility is here of an amazing culture! Here art may flower as never before. If art is an interpretation of the vision of life, then with the escape of man from the modern world, art may recover from its present delirium of subjectivism, to be once again a crown of corporate culture. The crafts that once adorned the homes and the common tools and furniture of men may be recalled with greater vigour. The home itself may resume its true place as the normal and now beautified shelter of the natural social unit. Poetry and letters may be rebaptised and refreshed. And games and amusements, delivered from the control of the money-interest, may become the active employment of many more, and the mere spectacle of many less, of our people. For it is possible, as we have suggested, that the power age will make feasible the break-up of the huge agglomerations of our populations in the dreadful urban areas, the reduction of society to what Ralph Adams Cram has called the human scale, in which a man may know his neighbours. Then will be revived in men the instinct to amuse and to enjoy *themselves*, and drama, music and sport may become truly the expressions of a rich social life.

I suggest that the Church will have somehow to

resume the task of directing the ideals of education, for the simple reason that the Church alone has an adequate doctrine of human ends, and in a leisure age the question of human ends will inevitably pose itself more persistently than was possible amidst the futilities of capitalist employment. And here we may pause to reflect upon the opportunity which conceivably awaits the Church's own life. Leisure may be the means of a revival of religion. The ousting of religion from the daily concern of millions of men is an achievement of the modern world, and a sign of its unnatural aims. The leisure age may become an age of worship. Certainly it will afford the faithful a thousand means, now lacking, of serving the Church directly. The social arts and crafts may become available for the beautifying of the externals of worship. The free time and greater economic resources of the people may be employed in providing ways and means of evangelising and teaching the world. And no vocation for the priesthood need be thwarted by the grim economic pressure of to-day, which has so crippled our spiritual power. Indeed, there is the possibility of a great growth of religious orders devoted to prayer and to service in a hundred forms. And there is even wider work awaiting the Church.

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I believe that the removal of artificial economic stress will, amongst other effects, cause the decline of the State from the position of exaggerated importance which it now occupies in human arrangements. It will thus allow the emergence of those other and equally real social cohesions to which reference was made in our fifth chapter, amidst which we may hope that the Church may come to occupy a position of such centrality and leadership as we there described as sovereignty. In that situation, provided the Church were loyal to her own sanctions and the true interpreter of her own Faith, men would be the more rapidly guided to all the happier uses of the new potentialities.

National States have emerged in the natural diversity of the earth's peoples, though they do not invariably represent unity of race, language, or religion. But the State, necessary to the corporate life, begins to assume an exaggerated importance and power in periods of international unrest or of social strain. The relations of men and of nations, which ought ultimately to be governed by the consciousness of a common fellowship, are controlled internationally by a network of pacts, conventions and alliances, and finally by armies and navies; and socially by a myriad printed rules and finally by the police. These devices are forced upon

us in their overbearing and indeed absurd complexity, by the necessity of imposing outward order in a situation from which inner cohesion has departed. It is for the Church to provide that inner cohesion amongst men, which will in itself be the surest guarantee of co-operative international and social peace; for there is literally no other conceivable source from which it may be derived. There is nowhere else a doctrine of man, a doctrine of personality and society, equal to this demand.

One thing at least is certain. The removal of fierce economic pressure will sap the springs of the jealous and suspicious nationalism that has long disgraced Europe and has set an ugly fashion for the peoples of the earth. And when the material walls are down, there will arise the possibility of a true intercourse of nations and a general enrichment of culture. I do not mean by this a barren cosmopolitanism, but the harmonious relation of real diversity. And what power or influence is to lead to the realisation of this possibility, what indeed is to prevent the contagion of the worst, and to secure the common enjoyment of the noblest, contributions of the nations to the stock of the world's life, but the Holy Catholic Church? For the Catholic Faith, as Jacques Maritain has said, is the one religion

which refuses to be absorbed in any culture; and yet it is the most potent cultural stimulus.

And even wider grows the prospect, reaching out beyond the circumference of what we still, by some persistent intuition of faith, call Christendom, and revealing a new facility for the Church's approach to the stubborn problems of the mission field. When all that is best has been said of British imperialism, and of the economic and political undertakings of the white races in Asia and Africa, there remains one indisputable fact. The necessities of the accepted economic purpose have made vastly more difficult the labours of the Christian Church. The imposition of alien governments, the often ruthless exploitation of natural resources and of native peoples, in the interests of capitalist investment, have provided a steady contradiction of the Gospel and a constant denial of the fellowship taught and offered by the Church. The suggestion of racial superiority conveyed in a hundred open or disguised forms has traduced the Catholic Gospel of equality in Christ. It would be presumptuous in me to expatiate upon the problems of racial relations to you who have those problems always present with you. But at least there is this to be said. As the modern economic has spread over the world, it has intensified



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those difficulties which would normally provide a stimulating challenge to faith and common sense, until they have not seldom become nightmares. African slavery was one of the early and crude instruments of the economic of profit; and to-day the same economic system is causing strife between yellow, white and brown.

Can you imagine the moral advantage accruing to the Church in her missionary efforts, from the abrogation of that false economic motive which has been one of the chief subjects of our long discussion? Can you conceive the fresh reality which would infuse the preaching of the Gospel in the world? The ancient religions, the tribal customs, are breaking under the impact of our western attack. And can we complain if they are replaced by a more unscrupulous commercialism, a fiercer and more single-minded militarism, than we have yet seen? Can we complain if our motive return upon us some day with terror and destruction? But if the West is wise enough to accept the opportunity which the unfathomable mercy of God is placing before it, that danger may be averted. The Church may go with transparent purpose, as the accredited leader of the western world, to welcome into the communion of Christ, with its full political and

economic meaning, all the peoples of the earth. And Christendom may mean mankind.

It may appear that I have wandered far from that spiritual uprising of a century ago, which is called the Oxford Movement. But the world has travelled far, and man in his pilgrimage has come to strange places. The quiet Oxford where Newman and Keble walked is transformed. The tides of modern life roar through its streets, and in its ancient colleges are the perplexities of modern thought, the restless questionings of modern men. But I have attempted to show that what happened in Oxford a hundred years ago was the recovery, within the English Church, of the true principles of social direction. It is no disproof of my thesis, that the Oxford Movement was primarily the reassertion of the Catholic Faith and the Catholic Church; for that the surest social direction springs from the realities given in Christ and His Fellowship is the truth that I have laboured to establish.

I have urged that it is the Faith that a distracted and threatened world most sorely needs, to be the characterising centre of its life. For we have seen that the conception of man's task, the method of his approach to the world, and the mode of his association with his fellows in that task indicated by the Catholic

religion, neglected by the confident secularism of the modern world, afford nevertheless the very principles by which the world situation can now be controlled for human good. Surely it must be clear that the material welfare and the spiritual good of men cannot permanently be pursued by unrelated methods.

If, then, I urge upon you a deepened sense of the Church's significance in the world, I am not inviting you to a narrow and anæmic ecclesiasticism. But on the other hand, as you may remember, at the outset of these studies, I rejected any apologetic for the Church as a mere implement of economic well-being, and therefore it is no design of mine to ask you to measure the Church's meaning by what she may be able to effect as the servant of human society whereof the ends are less than congruous with her own. Rather I am inviting you to a concern for human destiny, for the very meaning and value of our humanity, as these are contained and expressed in the Redeemed Society, the Body of Christ set down in human history.

If in this turn and crisis of man's story, the Church is visibly to show herself the living Sacrament of Man's Redemption, all the sanctity, all the fervour of prayer, all the sacramental piety, all the spiritual discipline and moral seriousness of the Tractarians must be hers in

full measure. A heavenly commission of great honour is being prepared for her. Indeed, it is only as the greatness of her calling, the mystery of her nature, and the world's deep need of her, enter fully into her consciousness, that her own diseases will pass, her visible disunion, her confusion of schools, her divided counsels.

Beneath these earthly skies, now clouded with apocalyptic signs, she alone is left to declare that the mortal life of man is fraught with honourable and holy purpose. Of that purpose she claims to be the minister and the exemplification. Let her now assert that this purpose is contradicted, not by the physical realities of man's environment, not by the necessary conditions of his labour, but only by his falsely chosen ends and their idiot consequences. Let her announce to the world the historic introduction of the Gospel: Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Let her speak the word that will give freedom and fellowship. For if she fail it will never be spoken.



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In his will he bequeathed to Western Theological Seminary, now Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, of Evanston, Ill., a fund to be held in trust "for the general purpose of promoting the Catholic Faith, in its purity and integrity, as taught in Holy Scripture, held by the Primitive Church, summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils, and, in particular, to be used only and exclusively for the establishment, endowment, printing, and due circulation of a yearly Sermon . . . and . . . of Courses of Lectures."

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*The National Church of Sweden.* By the Rt. Rev. John Wordsworth, D.D., LL.D., late Bishop of Salisbury. 1910.

*Biographical Studies in Scottish Church History.* By the Rt. Rev. Anthony Mitchell, D. D., late Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney. 1913.

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